

Fall 1994

Commonthought (Fall 1994)

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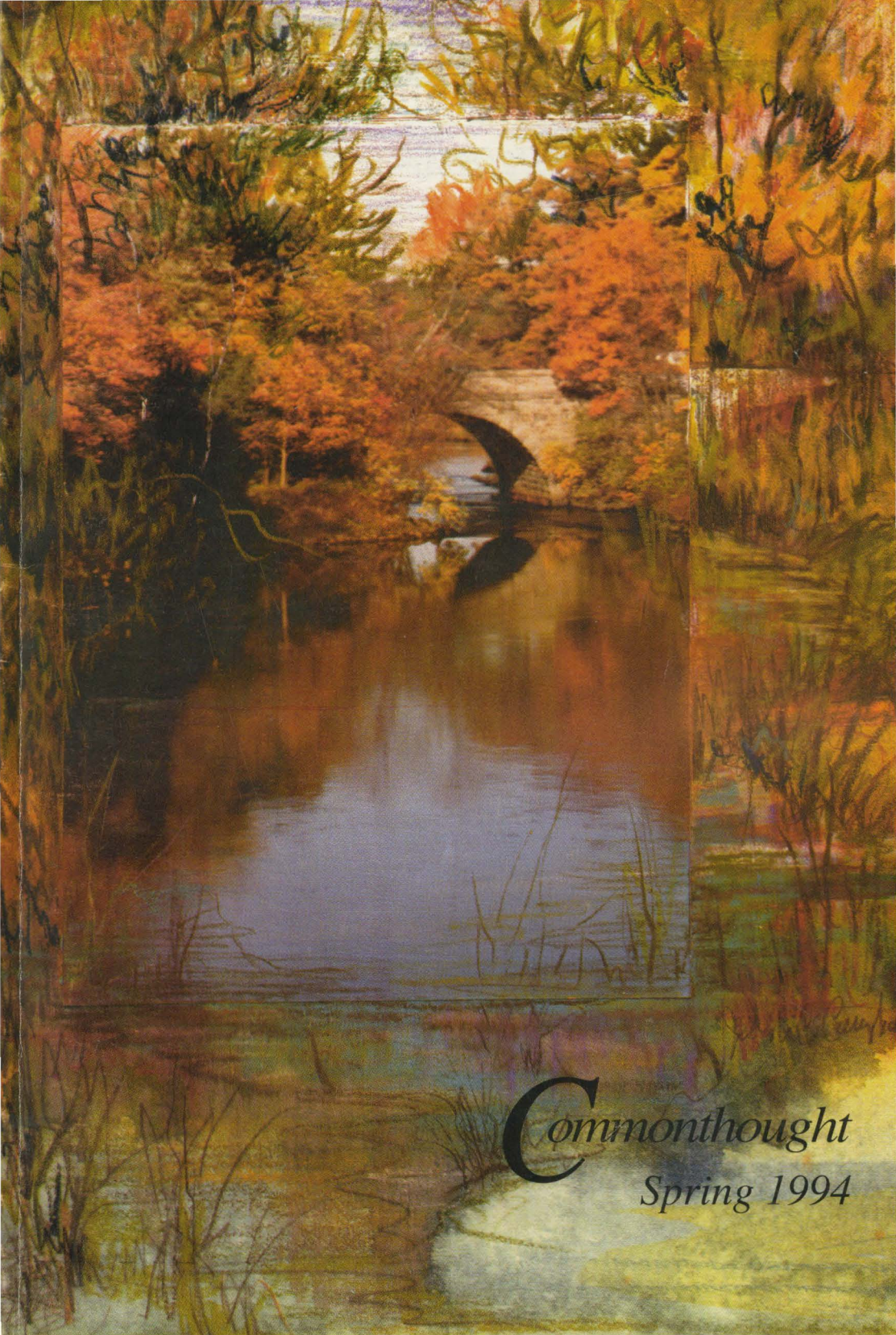


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Commonthought
Spring 1994

Commonthought

Spring 1994

Magazine of the Arts *at Lesley College*

Volume V, Number 1

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SPECIAL THANKS TO:

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Dr. Stephen Trainor
Liberal Studies Division
Office of Student Affairs
Microcomputer Center
Regina Meadows

*The thoughts, beliefs, and opinions expressed in this Literary Magazine
are not necessarily those of the magazine, staff, or Lesley College.*

Letter From the Editor:

My hat goes off to my talented, enthusiastic, and energetic staff for making this issue of *Commonthought* so pleasurable for me to publish this year. This issue of *Commonthought* is bursting with extraordinary literary and artistic talent from the Lesley community. It is the collaborative efforts of the contributors' talents and the staffs' dedication that has made this issue of *Commonthought* the best one to date.

The talented and extremely artistic contributors have my undying gratitude because if it were not for your courage to share with the Lesley community your artistic works, *Commonthought* would not be celebrating its fifth anniversary this year. So, keep those submissions coming to make the sixth issue bigger and better than ever.

The staff and I would especially like to thank Dr. Stephen Trainor and the Liberal Studies Division for supporting this student-run Literary Magazine, and for having the faith that it would grow into an anticipated annual event within the Lesley community. And of course, Sebastian Lockwood, our faculty advisor, must also be applauded for encouraging and supporting the staff at every turn. I would also like to personally thank Mr. Lockwood for trusting and allowing me to express my own creative talents in publishing this issue of *Commonthought*.

This issue of *Commonthought* is dedicated to Peg Shea and Sally K. Lenhardt, who both recently past away after fighting courageous battles with cancer. Their presence on campus will be sorely missed in the Lesley community, but they will not be forgotten, for their memories are ingrained in the hearts of those they touched.

Best Wishes,

Amanda M. McNuge

Amanda M. McNuge
Editor-in-Chief

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The Ultimate Act

Amanda M. McNuge

A lone
Cold
Miserable
Fearful
Ashamed

My tall, thick, invisible, impenetrable walls
Reach to heaven
Hoping to see the light
Hoping to feel the warmth
But my walls never allow anything through
My walls are my defense
My protection.

With no light shining through
Darkness and despair
Fill me
Engulf me
Surround me
Torture me.

All because one man forcefully entered
My life
My body
My mind
My heart
My childhood!

I now stay awake
Tossing
Turning
Praying

The pain
The memories
Will fade away
But they do not.

Instead my feelings
Intensify
Multiply
To the point where I hope I will never see
A new day
A new dawn
A new year.

I want
I search
I plead to be in my alabaster chamber
The smooth icy satin against my flesh
My body encased and protected by mahogany.

Placed in my grave
My sanctuary
My paradise
My Eden
By my hand or God's.

For it is the only place I will ever feel safe again!



Untitled

Dawn Presnell

To My Dearest Mom,

Mom, you're someone that has raised me from a little girl to a grown woman. I realize that I haven't been the world's most perfect daughter and, Mom, I am really sorry about that. I am sorry that I let you down. If I had only done what you and Dad asked me, maybe then I would have turned out a better person. I never meant to cause the family so much pain by running away from home. When I left, I figured it was for the best. John made me feel more accepted then I felt in our family. He was good to me for a while but, Mom, again you were right. He wasn't the man that would love and care for me forever.

Mom, I am writing to you today because I have something very important to tell you. Don't worry, I am not pregnant and I haven't contracted any diseases. I do though have a very serious illness that is killing me. Please don't get upset with me; I really just need you to listen. I need your support, Mom, most of all. This is so hard for me to tell you but I have to. Mom, I am an Anorexic-Bulimic and I have been for a long time now. I have been starving my body and when I get so hungry that I need to eat, I eat massive amounts of food. Then I vomit later to get rid of it. I have done this for many reasons. I thought I was fat, I was depressed, and Mom, I hated myself. I have done so many things wrong. I can't change them, so I found it easier to punish myself instead of facing them. This is the first time I have really come out and admitted it to myself or to anyone else.

I am in the hospital at the moment. The doctors are trying very hard to renourish my body. I can't eat on my own so they feed me through an intravenous tube. They tell me I am not in good shape, Mom. Dr. Wenick tells me that I have done permanent damage to my esophagus, intestines, muscular and skeletal systems, and many of my vital organs. Mom, I don't want to die. I am still too young. Why

should this be my punishment if I promise to change? I need a second chance. Please help me!!!! I need you.

Love you,
Christina

Dearest Christina,

My precious little girl, what on earth have you done to yourself? I don't understand, you were such a happy child till you met John. Why did he have to change you? That boy was nothing but trouble. I am glad that you have finally realized that. There are plenty of boys out there. I know you could have done better if you had only tried harder.

Sweetheart, your father and I only wanted you to be happy. We never wanted you to be perfect. Most of all, we wished you had never left home. I know there was a lack of communication between us but we didn't try hard enough. When you come home from the hospital, we will work this all out. Things won't be the same as they used to be. I promise we will be more understanding. Darling, rest and get well. Get your strength back because you will be coming home.

I am so sorry I can't be by your side right away. Once I get my leave of absence, I will be there. Please stay strong. We both love and miss you.

Love,
MOM

Dearest Mom,

It has been over two weeks and you still have not come to see me. Can you no longer face me because of my wrong doings? Are you ashamed of me? Come on, tell me what it is this time that I have done. Mom, I am dying; the doctors have told me that. They have been trying their hardest to keep me alive as long as they have. Mother, I am going to DIE!!!

How can you turn your back on me? I am ready to give up and die. There is no life left in me. Mom, I have reached that point where its okay. This is my punishment but can't you come and see me? Can't you come and tell stories like you used to? I want to die in peace, Mom. Please don't let me down this one time. I know I have let you down but its not fair. I am your daughter. Can't you feel my pain? You didn't even address it in your letter. Mom, this is very serious. I am not playing a joke for attention. I need you.

Can't you see why I ran away from home? It's all your fault. If only you would have listened to me and talked with me. You never knew who I was. Work was more important to you than I was. Mom, I wasn't happy and it was so obvious. How can you assume I was? There's nothing left for me to live for. Good-bye, Mother, I'm sorry that you won't see me again.

Christina



Untitled

Anonymous

He carves with precision and artistry. His hands are short and stocky much like the rest of his physique. The art of wood carving is one that has been passed down through the generations on my father's side of the family. Many things have been passed down through my father's side of the family; however they have not been of such a positive nature. Slapping, hitting and throwing are done with artistry as well. "Daddy, did you know that I loved you?" "No daddy, you don't understand, did you know that I fucking loved you?"

*Flashbacks...*they happen every day. Daddy we were on the beach and you chased me. I was scared and I was crying. I tried to pretend that I was laughing. I wasn't. I was crying because I knew that you were going to hurt me again. "Daddy did you know that I loved you?" You threw me up against the wall in a fit of rage. I was scared and was crying. I tried to pretend that I was laughing. I wasn't. I was crying because I knew that you were going to hurt me again. "Daddy did you know that I loved you?" I filled my lungs with THC. I filled my brain with LSD. It wasn't the drugs that were killing me inside, it was you. Why did you try to hurt me? Why can't you see it? Why won't you let me love you? I just wanted a daddy. Fuck you! I tried.



Learning How To Drive

Amanda M. McNuge

It was a cold windy autumn day in 1988 when my fearless father gave me my first driving lesson, but it wasn't any ordinary driving lesson. It was the driving lesson from Hell because my father had to be different from everyone else's parents. He couldn't simply teach me to drive the ordinary way, in Drive, for that would be too easy and ordinary. Instead, I learned to drive in Reverse before I learned to drive in Drive. I also didn't learn to drive on the streets like normal teenagers. I learned to drive in the quiet, but densely populated *Oak Grove Cemetery* located in Medford, Massachusetts. My father's logical reasoning for teaching me to drive in a cemetery was that this way I couldn't kill anyone because everyone was already dead. Talk about not having faith in my driving abilities! However, I found this reasoning logical, too. I did not want to be 16 years old, and arrested for vehicular homicide. So, off we drove to the cemetery, and the traumatic and hilarious adventure began.

We entered the cemetery through the main gate, but I did not see the gate for my imagination had taken hold, and transformed the gate into the Mouth of Hell. Scorching and roaring flames surrounded us, and the Mouth was opening and closing as though it was going to swallow us whole. My heart was racing and I was covered in sweat, but I only came to my senses when the car came to a halt next to the Civil War Monument. My father chose the old section of the cemetery to give me my first driving lesson because he figured everyone there had been dead for at least a hundred years, and needed some excitement and laughter, since they haven't been able to go anywhere lately. My father also did not want me running over any fresh graves which again seemed reasonable and logical to me.

At this point, we both exited the car so that we could switch positions, but as I walked to the other side of the car I heard the trees and the leaves on the ground rustle. I stopped looked around and saw that the birds in the trees had taken flight, and the squirrels and other

animals had run to higher ground for cover. I felt totally abandoned, but it was a wise decision on their part. Eventually, I situated myself behind the wheel of the Ford Taurus, and looked out over the hood of the car that suddenly became as long as a football field, now that I was in the driver's seat, and not in the passenger's seat. I proceeded as any good driver would to reposition the side and rearview mirrors, but what I was actually doing was stalling. However, the inevitable, yet shocking words were spoken by my father, "With your foot on the brake take the car out of Park and put into Reverse." This unexpected statement gave me a fright far worse, than the length of the hood. I must have given my father a look that said, "you must be joking," because he repeated the command again. The people walking and visiting loved ones in the cemetery that day must have thought we were crazy, but there I was driving backwards in the old section of the cemetery.

It took me a while to get the feel of the car and to stop weaving, and as soon as I did I was told to back up this hill, which is known as *Dead Man's Hill* because it is so steep that it looks more like a cliff than a road. The road has many sharp curves that prevents drivers from seeing cars coming in the opposite direction making this road extremely dangerous. *Dead Man's Hill* could very easily make an inexperienced driver become another permanent resident of *Oak Grove Cemetery*. So, here I am scared to death driving in Reverse up this hill that I would not even ride my dirt bike or ten speed on as kid. I succeeded in getting to the top of the hill, but not without losing circulation in my hands from holding on to the steering wheel so tight, and not without running over a few dead people. I'm sure they were as thankful, as I was, that they were already dead and buried because if they weren't in the ground I would most assuredly have killed them. A few trees also popped out of no where on me, but I think that was God's doing, not because I didn't see the trees. When I finally reached the top of the hill, I was never so thankful to stop moving in all my life. But, my father didn't even let the circulation return to my hands because he then said, "Now, back down the hill." I couldn't believe my ears. Never mind not allowing my circulation to return, my father didn't even give me time to wallow in my triumph, but I did what I was

told. I was barely able to catch my breath from my first near death experience, when I began driving backwards down *Dead Man's Hill*.

I thought driving up the hill in Reverse was bad enough, but driving down *Dead Man's Hill* in Reverse was another totally new life threatening experience. My second within minutes! I was thankful that God was so close to me that day because my father neglected to tell me as we were proceeding backwards around the curves that the car would speed up going down the hill, and that I should have my foot on the break. So, here I was flying down this hill and whipping around curves thinking at least we made everyone's job a little bit easier. They wouldn't have to take us to the cemetery to bury us when we die because we would already be there. Newspaper headlines were flashing in my head: "Father Giving Daughter Reverse Driving Lesson Dies in Cemetery Car Crash," or "Father and Daughter Die When Car Plunges into Open Grave," or "In a Freak Driving Lesson Accident Father and Daughter are Crushed to Death by a Civil War Cemetery Monument."

Space Mountain seemed like a kiddie ride compared to my first Reverse driving lesson down *Dead Man's Hill*, and the admission was free. The best part about the ride is that I wouldn't have to caution that the ride could be dangerous to people with heart conditions because all I would have to do is open the car door and push them into an open grave if they died on me.

I did, however, make it down the hill in one piece and so did the car, but my father looked a little pale. I heard him mumble under his breath when we reached the bottom of *Dead Man's Hill*, "Thank God she's the last one who needs driving lessons." We continued driving around the cemetery for another twenty minutes or so, but nothing too adventurous happened. Eventually, I learned to become a great driver, and I can parallel park anywhere, but this is only due to my father's unusual teaching methods. Who ever said women are not good drivers never met a student of my father's.

Thanks Dad!

Is That...?

Teresa Meile

A Familiar Stranger on my bus
tempts me into a World of Fantasy
where my Dead Grandfather Lives;
now eight years Gone,
but somehow Resurrected
on the #71 bus to watertown.

Minutes are like an Eternity
as i wait to see His Face.
His Hair,
His Build,
His Voice
mirror my Lost Childhood Memories
of a Grandfather i saw weekly,
but never Knew.

our destination is reached;
God, Please let it be Him.
i run to see His Face,
to see My Grandfather—Oh, Please!

i do.
oh, god—
it's not.

A Georgia Memory

Pamela F. WattsFlavin

It is late as the car speeds through the darkness. As we roll up and down through the hills of Georgia, I watch the blur of the trees through the side window. Everything is dark. The trees, the road, the sky. Gradually, the stars appear up ahead, through the windshield, so that it seems that we are chasing them through the night. Up we go, then down. First up one side of the hill, then down the other. Over and over again.

"How much further?", I wonder.

The car is silent except for the rush of air passing through the crack in the window. Quiet. So quiet. Too quiet. I know I must say something, anything to fill the empty silence. I inhale and turn to speak. Something light. Hollow noise to fill the empty space of the silence.

Instead, I stop. I study the side of her face. Her eyes are forward, staring at the back of the seat in front of her. She looks weary; tired from the day? or tired from life? I notice the black that is constant through the patches of gray in her hair. So like my mother's. So like mine when I get older? As old as she is?

The silence is broken by murmuring from the front seat. Low voices that barely rise above the constant rush of wind. Their tones rolling up and down following the roll of the hills. "Static economy." "Marketing analysis." "Clip plans." The words only come to me in spurts. It's okay. I'm not interested. I've heard it before. I'll hear those voices again.

I turn toward the window as rain begins to splash against the glass. It is so dark out there. The rain only adds to the loneliness. Is it only me that feels the loneliness? Only me that chills from the darkness and the rain? We've all been doing this for so long.

I slide my hand across the seat and clasp her hand in mine. It's warm and dry in my palm. I can feel every bone and vein. This isn't the hand that I remember. This isn't the hand that used to hold mine.

I want to reach further and gather her in my arms and hold her for as long as it takes...for as long as it takes.

"Did you have a nice Christmas, Grammy?" I finally ask, squeezing her hand.

She turns her stare from the back of the seat and fixes it in mine. I'm smiling, hopeful, waiting. We look at each other for a long time. I can remember those eyes from as far back as I've ever known. Eyes that never really sparkled. Eyes that never really laughed. Just eyes, but they are so familiar to me.

I wait. She waits.

I can see her studying my face as I was studying hers. I wonder if she sees anything there. If she sees my mother in me. Herself in my mother. Me in her. I was a teenager when she first pointed out the similarity. "We all have the same legs," she had commented, eyeing mine in their shorts. My mother was there. She laughed. Thrilled. "I am like my mother and my daughter is like me. It continues. Always continues."

I ran from the room. Sad, humiliated, angry that they had set my destiny before I had even the chance to discover it. "Who wants to be like them?", I thought then. 'I do', I think, now.

Her eyes trace my face, my jawbone, my eyebrows and finally rest on my dangling earrings. She pauses there. I wonder what she is thinking. If she could, would she sniff, "not very ladylike?"

Being a lady. Was that so important? "Always wear stockings," she used to say. "Always wear gloves to shake hands." A disapproving stare over her glasses. "Ladies never drink beer." After I had just ordered one to go with my pizza. Ladies.

I wait. She waits.

I remember...my tenth birthday. The only thing I wanted was for her to be there. They had fought, my father and her. She packing her bags. Leaving. Swearing never to return. He yelling after her that she was never welcome. I wanted her there. I ran home from school on that day. Not waiting for my friends. Not seeing the new snow. Running in the street to avoid the ice on the paths. Panting. I rounded the corner. There was her car with the out-of-state plates. She was there!

When I was eleven, she came back. I was sick, measles or something. Tired. Hot. Bored. She came into my room.

"Tell me a story, Grammy," I demanded.

"A story?", she eyed me with suspicion. "About what?"

"When you were young, like me." Was she ever like me?

"Oh,... you don't want to hear about that. That's boring. I'll read you something."

But, to me, it wasn't boring. I would have wanted to know. I still want to know.

Me in her. Her in me. Her stories are a part of me.

I wonder, in the car, in these hills. "Why couldn't she tell me?"

I wait. She waits.

At seventeen, I went away for the first time, to college. Her letters followed me. Like clockwork. Once a week. Her handwriting, clear, round, old-fashioned, neat. "Don't let the boys talk you into something you'll be sorry for later," the letters said. "The weather here is fine...went to New York for a show last week." One page. Punctual. No more. No less. Once a week.

I wait. She waits.

I watch her. She watches me.

I begin to think that she's not going to answer me. I start to turn away, back to the window, back to the rain.

"Don't let them take me back there."

I just hold her hand. I just hold her hand.



Through A Child's Eyes

Andrea B. Tower

Growing up is hard each passing year,
as a baby I was pampered from ear to ear.
I now have to learn how to let go,
things once so comforting I now forgo.
Mom went back to work with the breasts attached
a new nipple of plastic is all that is left.
Months pass and suddenly plastic nipple is gone
left with a drinking devise to hang on.
Bedtime is determined by Mom and Dad
the doctor told Mom, "she must learn," how sad.
When I cry in the night no-one hears my calls
no more breasts, no bottles, no hugs, just four walls.
I am trying to understand all of these rules
but I think that adults are nothing but fools.
O.K. I agree to sleep through the night
and try to grow up and let go of the fright.
But, don't rush me too quick, I still have time
to enjoy what is left of my baby design.
I'll drink from a cup and eat with a spoon
nothing else for now it is still too soon.
The hugs that I miss during the night
I'll get from my Mom during day light.
My plea is to all the adults out there,
growing up is hard each passing year.
Don't rush me, you all, I need more time
to enjoy my videos, toys, books and play time.
Just hug me and love me and watch me grow
be there when I fall and, please, never let go.

For Blake



Dog Days

Martha Hagerty

Nothing could compare to the joy I felt at the beginning of the summer of 1993. I'd been anticipating those four months of stress-free living since the beginning of the spring semester. I had it all planned out; I had a decent full-time job that wasn't in a mall, I had every weekend off, I would be taking no classes, and best of all I would be staying with my boyfriend, Ben, and his family. Ben's family consisted of his mom, Barbara, the coolest parent I have ever met, and his dog, Gus, an enormous four-year-old Golden Retriever. Ben, Barbara and I had discussed our living arrangement on numerous occasions, and we knew that it would be fun. I planned to devote my summer to leisure and the pursuit of money. I, of course, never considered the impact that this dog, who seemed to spend most of his time curled and asleep on his favorite rug, could have on my newly distressed life.

Before I moved in, Gus and I had never really spent any quality time together. I thought he was sort of cute and maybe a little excitable. I soon learned that "excitable" was a huge understatement. Gus was wild! As soon as a guest walked in the door, Gus would bound down the hall towards them, leap on them and start licking them in the face. Then he would proceed to do gleeful laps around the apartment, just long enough for the lucky visitor to regain consciousness, before he greeted him or her again, soaking the individual in doggie drool. Since I was relatively new to Gus, I got his "greeting" every time I walked in the door for the first month that I lived there. Needless to say, I did not find it endearing. My beloved Ben was oblivious to my anguish.

"Gus is just spirited," he said.

"He's disgusting!" I replied. "Can't you train him not to do that?"

Time and again, my complaints fell on deaf ears. For Ben and Gus had a special bond. They were companions, they were brothers, they were soulmates. My big, tough boyfriend would get tears in his eyes when he told the story of the day he brought Gus home. He also

used a special tone of voice with Gus. It was the sort of sickeningly sweet tone that new parents use with their babies. Gus loved it. The worst thing of all was that Ben insisted that Gus sleep with us.

He'd say, "I'm the luckiest guy in the world! I have my girlfriend on one side, and my best friend on the other!" I thought he needed mental help.

I asked Barbara if Ben had always been this peculiar when it came to dogs. She showed me his journal from second grade. It was a whole notebook filled with Ben's dreams of having a dog of his own. It said "I love dogs!" on practically every page. I knew that there was no hope of changing him, and that I would have to deal with Gus's little quirks on my own. And he had many little quirks.

His eating habits were his biggest problem. Gus ate *everything*! He ate anything that was left unattended and within his reach. Many times when I was preparing food, if I turned my back for a few seconds it would be gone when I turned back around. Once I bought sesame seed bagels, and put them far back on the counter, presumably out of Gus's reach. I left the room for a few minutes, and they were gone when I returned. I was enraged to find sesame seeds stuck in Gus's teeth!

Food was not the only thing that Gus like to eat. He had a special liking for items of clothing, particularly socks and underwear fresh from the dryer. He also enjoyed hair ties and shoelaces. The way we would find out what had happened to our missing items was particularly upsetting. It is no fun to recognize your favorite flowered hair tie when you're picking it up in a pooper scooper!

Gus's other quirks, although strange, weren't quite as bad as his eating thing. I found that whenever I sat down, Gus felt the need to sit all eighty pounds of himself on my lap. Apparently he saw himself as much smaller than he actually was. He also like to jump up on all the furniture as soon as no one was looking. If one of us caught and scolded him, he ran over to that person, wagged his tail, and licked them until he was forgiven.

Gus also loved other dogs. If he saw another dog when I was walking him, he would practically yank my arm off to try to get to the

other dog, his tail wagging furiously. He even liked to watch dogs on TV. He would sit looking at the screen, mesmerized, while a dog was on, and would become disinterested as soon as the dog was gone. He seemed to enjoy the movie *White Fang* so much that we considered buying him his own copy.

By the end of the summer, I was really starting to like Gus. I'd become used to his peculiarities and adapted accordingly. I was able to appreciate his sweetness and good nature. Barbara and Ben both said that Gus had me hooked. When Ben went back to school and Barbara went to New York on business, I was only too happy to take care of Gus. I figured that it would be my chance to say good-bye to him before I left for school. Little did I anticipate the adventure that was in store for me!

Gus didn't seem to be himself for the first two days that I spent with him. For one thing, he didn't seem to want to eat, and this was not at all like him. He wasn't as peppy as he usually was. He didn't attack me when I came in, he just wagged his tail and sat in a corner. By the third day I was worried. Gus wasn't eating at all, and when he drank some water he immediately threw it up. I took him to the vet, who told me to keep an eye on him and bring him in early the next morning for tests.

Gus and I got up bright and early that day, and set out for the animal hospital in a cab. Gus was acting a bit more chipper, but I brought along a plastic bag, just in case he wasn't feeling well. The cabbie was a total loser. He was smoking constantly, and kept jamming on the brakes. I felt a little nauseous, so I really should have known what would happen next. When we were about halfway there, Gus began to vomit.

I tried to get him to use my little impromptu barf bag, but he knocked it aside and proceeded to hurl all over the back of the cab. The cabbie screeched to the side of the road and started swearing. He kicked us out of the cab, screaming obscenities out the window as he drove away. Poor sick Gus and I had to walk the rest of the way to the animal hospital. My only consolation was that the nasty cabbie had a real nasty mess to clean up. As soon as we got to the animal hospital,

Gus lay there on the floor listlessly. I was really worried when the vet took him in to be examined, but he reassured me and told me he'd call me at work when they found out what was wrong.

A few hours later the vet called to tell me that they'd found a small object blocking Gus's small intestine, and they would have to operate to remove it and find out whether or not it was a tumor. I was terribly upset. I phoned Barbara in New York to give her the latest update on Gus's condition. She immediately left for home. After about four hours of waiting, the doctor finally called. He said that the procedure went well, and that they had removed a large piece of rug from Gus's small intestine. He said that Gus was in recovery and that in a few hours, he could have visitors. When Barbara and I went to see him, Gus looked small and tired. His stomach and left paw had been shaved, giving him the appearance of a worn-out teddy bear. He wagged his tail groggily when he saw us. The doctor explained that he was still pretty drugged-up and tired from the operation. He wanted Gus to stay overnight for observation, but said that he would be just fine.

The next day we picked Gus up to bring him home. He was much happier than the day before, but still really tired and sore. The doctor told us to keep a close watch on him to make sure he didn't eat anything. We figured it wouldn't be a problem since he didn't seem to be feeling too well. As soon as we walked out of the door of the animal hospital, Gus lunged for the garbage dumpster to look for a snack! Luckily we were able to hold onto him! After that, Gus's recovery went pretty smoothly, and now he is doing fine!

Since my adventure with Gus, we have developed a special bond, sort of like the one that he and Ben have. Now, he can do no wrong in my eyes. I absolutely love him. A few times I have even caught myself using that special, sickeningly sweet tone of voice when talking to Gus. And I always let him sleep in my bed when I stay with him! I even put his picture next to Ben's in my locket. To top it all off, I just wrote a story about him! I think *I* may need mental help!

The Labyrinth Dancers

Barton Kunstler

They gather, children of the labyrinth
dripping almonds into honey
and sipping sweet absinthe
no suffering infects these innocent skies
reflected in unreflective eyes
no offering need heal these unwounded lands
tended by tender hands.

no one here any longer treads
though each may try in slow despair
with our offerings to repair
those unsettled districts of the mind
wherein each we have a home

but distant voices call us yet
to the gaily painted tangled ways
midst whose glitter we trace our threads
to a goring in the secret place
among the subterranean grays
in whose purling rivers yet take shape
the death the beauty of our days.

the repetitive mockery of the ruins
rives dance and music from twisting time
and reduces the pattern of our years
to just another paradigm
while upon a fallen shaft we sat
demanding nothing of these fired fields
but the chord that draws
us to where mind and body yields
to dancers' sweet meanderings
binding close both death and life
disarming their sharp mockery
calling forth the moment of delight
from the folds of dark eternity.

Prayer for the Lives of the She Children

Judith Periale

She is three months old—she doesn't know that she could die because she is a she and that sometimes shes don't count—she will be bartered for camels or sold as a toy—she will be accused of seduction by merely existing—she will be forced to throw her live body onto her husband's funeral pyre—she will be pinched and grabbed because she doesn't own her own body—she will be asked what she did to deserve this as she lies bloodied on the pavement—she will begin to ask herself the same question—she will be used to cool sexual heat—she will be called whore—she will be veiled all her life and hidden away from greedy groping eyes—she will raise her children alone while he brags on the street about what a man he is—she will have the bones in her feet broken and bound for beauty's sake—she will have the church doors slammed in her face—she will push a button for 71 cents when he makes a dollar—she will be sold from her homeland to serve the desires of wealth—she will be beaten when she is late with dinner—she will be killed when she resists—she will see others resisting and she will, finally, say *enough*—she will stop believing in silence—she will unbind her feet and say *mutilation*—she will look into the eyes of her accusers and say *what I was wearing is not the point*—she will say *I decide who touches me*—she will march with thousands and say *I deserve to have choices*—she will form women's cooperatives

in rice paddies and Tanzanian farms—she will join
collectives on Costa Rican plantations and rally
with Latvian childcare workers—she will say
I am not crazy: I'm angry—she is three months old—
she will cry and sleep and assume she is safe—
my prayer is that someday she will be.

June 1993



Poem For Small Voices

Cheryl Smith

Some voices weren't made
for leading troops into battle
or for fanning the flames
of angry revolution
in a righteous people
Some voices weren't made
to preach from the pulpit
to a church crammed full
of the already-converted
Some voices are small
more whisper than roar
Some voices must be listened to
to be heard—with a hand
cupped around the ear
to mute the drone
of background noise
Some voices will never be heard
little cries in the dark
mute pleas to deafened angels

For the small voice
life is a series of snapshots
taken at extremely close range
The small voice assimilates
events one at a time
pulling them through
the soul's needle eye
until each catastrophe
or triumph is as thin
and focused as a laser beam

For the small voice
the horror of AIDS
plague of the twentieth century
political battleground
becomes one extinguished candle
named Vinnie—a carpenter
who grew tomatoes on his fire escape
painted his bedroom turquoise
his bathroom Pepto-Bismol pink
and whose smile broke his face
in half with joy
For the small voice
AIDS becomes a walking skeleton named Carlos
breathing through a surgical mask
in his own apartment
to avoid whatever germs possible
who with his skin ablaze in purple splotches
like a gaudily wrapped Christmas present
was shipped home to Puerto Rico
to die in the arms of his mother

For the small voice
Bosnia shrinks from
a vast and war-torn land
to the ten year old boy
gut-shot and writhing
in unspeakable agony
lying alone on
a bare and stinking mattress
on a hospital corridor floor
because there are no more beds
and no more linen
No more antiseptic
to rinse his oozing blackened wound

No more morphine
to dull the screaming
edge of his pain
No more time
for the nurses
to hold his hand
cool his fevered head
and sing him lullabies
as he dies

For the small voice
Bosnia shrinks
to a single festering corpse
left unclaimed five days
in the fierce sun
without anything to drape
over its fly-covered obscenity
because the shooting never ceases
even for the few moments required
for the father to risk his own life
and dash out with a blanket
to throw quickly over
his little girl
his darling daughter
who ran outside
during a momentary lull
in the firestorm
to pick her mother
the single scraggly marigold
that miraculously still bloomed
a tiny beacon amidst
cracked and pitted concrete

The small voice grabs hold
of the smallest ray of hope
the way that little girl
grabbed the yellow marigold
and died without letting it go
The small voice sings lullabies
instead of anthems—songs full
of terror fear anger hope & love
so quietly that they may never be heard
but heard or unheard the small voice
will never stop singing
the small voice will never
let go of the marigold



Bosnia

Sebastian Lockwood

(after a photograph by Patrick Chauvel, cover *TLS*, May 14, 1993)

Her hand so large against her forehead.
Hands opened, worked by work in the land
by the carrying of fuel, by birth, by grief
she hangs her head on that hand that is
across the cross bar of her sons' grave.

CTEBO . . . *Stephen*

His shirt, his best shirt, drapes from the upright
and folds beneath her long bent fingers.
Her sagging weight supported by the cross
she hangs from while her other hand touches
the raw shovelled earth.
Her hair is pulled to each side of her head
leaving a white skull line behind the ash of her face.

Three cigarettes and a bread roll
balance on the far bar of the cross.
Two candles burn at the base
before a rough mug of black coffee.
The earth has not settled.

He will need the shirt, bread, tobacco and coffee
for the journey there by which he came so soon here.

She will not move.
This is not prayer
but weight of sons taken,
births forfeited.
She will not move.
She will not move.

Return

Kirk Margoles

how is it that we live
on this sterilized field of slaughter?
arrogant boys of empire
came and left
we say: no more
no more shall we be cowed by the sheafs of lies
no more shall we be trampled by the boots of insecurity
no more shall we be deterred from our souls' true paths
horses run through the fields
but not to deaden grass forever
return them
to their wild mother
to their wild father
return

repetition
a prisoner's pacing
factories breed murderers
break loose
go free
break loose
go free
don't enslave yourself
to the evil illusions
of bankers and businessmen
you say you're one of them
I say no no
I say no no
like horses run through the fields
but not to deaden the grass forever
return now
to your wild mother
to your wild father
return

Enemy of Emotions

Anonymous

Sadness
the enemy of happiness.
But can you know happiness
until you have known sadness?
And can you know sadness
until you have known happiness?

Hate
the enemy of love.
But can you feel love
until you have felt hate?
And can you feel hate
until you have felt love?

Death
the enemy of life.
For death ends
Love
Hate
Sadness
Happiness.
All of which are
The emotions of life.

But Life can be the enemy of Death.
For life is filled with
Love
Hate
Sadness
Happiness
All of which I no longer wish or want to feel.



Untitled
Sara Harlan

Pain arrives in third person.
He leaves through the back door,
Taking his memory with him.
But the screen door still squeaks in the wind.

Shakespeare and Company, or How I Spent My Summer Vacation

Anne Elezabeth Pluto

"I loved Shakespearean sonnets so much. I could live with Shakespeare. What could Shakespeare have known about the possibilities of a black girl in a new world on a dirt road in Arkansas, who is mute, taking that work—crawling inside that work?"

Maya Angelou, The Council Chronicle, Volume 3, Number 3.

February 1994

Several years ago, I had the opportunity to resurrect the Shakespeare Course, and had no premonition of where that desire would take me or the college. I wanted a stage; Shakespeare commanded one. At first it was only me, the lone professor, small figure on such "an unworthy scaffold." The second time around, the students were able to walk across it, and last April groups of them, armed with Arden texts, looked over an imaginary Agincourt to witness a Royal Fellowship of Death, while beautiful Belmont loomed behind them, waiting for the Oxford Street Players to transform Welch auditorium into the Italy of *The Merchant of Venice*.

Theatre is magic, and magic holds the miraculous in its strong hands, often in the 11th hour solutions, Act V of any Shakespearean play. Before leaving Boston for my summer training at Shakespeare and Company, I was told by my friend Gary Mitchell (now a director at Shakespeare and Company and a professor at Simon's Rock of Bard College) that Anne Pluto would not return home the same person. He had "done" the month long intensive workshop and Summer Training Institute before, and was doing it again. He was right.

I was prepared to work, and to work long hours. I was more than willing to be a student, so much so, that if not asked, the fact that I am a college professor never came up. In fact, when it did, my place in the outside world wasn't so much of a trump card, but somekind of inexplicable incongruity. It didn't always help me that I knew my "Edward's Sacred Blood" genealogy better than the four directors of the Summer Training Institute Shows.

The June Intensive Workshop was a complete microcosm of the Elizabethan world. We had Shakespeare text class, movement and dance, Alexander Technique, stage combat and voice class six days a week, starting at 8:30 am, with a half hour of Physical Awareness. It was grueling, with moments of deep despair and great success. I especially hated voice class. Mastering the Linklater Voice progression in a month, with its emphasis on loosening the jaw and using the entire body as a resonator was painful and at some points humiliating. Many of us wept in voice class; loosening the jaw actually triggers many memories; there wasn't anyone who had not been "shut up" as a child. But by the end of the summer I was, as they say, "on my voice" and able to better articulate many feelings inside and outside of my acting. In order to continue this soul expanding and strengthening work, that I have found more useful than therapy, I am now studying voice with the Master herself, Kristin Linklater and Frances West.

The Workshop culminated in scene work. I was given the part of Isabel, the Carmelite postulant from *Measure for Measure*, and a marvelous scene partner, Ed Pine, a gentleman in his 50's to play the lustful Angelo. Our scene was Act II, scene iv, where Isabel leaves the convent to come to Angelo to plead for the life of her wayward brother. I sewed a veil from a black pillowcase and found a black dress in the green room, but costume is only a small part of the transformation. Ed and I worked with various text and fight teachers to reach a pinnacle of meaning in sound and movement, building trust in a rape scene that required perfect timing to reach a brutal moment of violence. We were pleased with our final performance.

In late June the Workshop ended and 25 of the 60 participants moved from the Simon's Rock dorms to Lenox and into the Grange, a dilapidated 18th century house where there were no locks, no keys, and believe it or not, no theft. We lived 3 to a room; privacy was practically non-existent. Yet, it was the best communal living situation I'd ever had. We were all there for the same purpose.

At our auditions for the *Henry VI Chronicles*, my piece was the Chorus' final speech from Henry V. My goal was to play a man, and to be in a sword fight. Half of my prayer was answered. In a

production where all the women played men, and the men, women, I was cast as both the Lancastrian king, Henry VI and Edmund, the young Earl of Rutland, son of the Duke of York in *The Rise of Richard III*, a play with the text taken from *Henry VI, Part III*, and *Richard III*. Neither the young Earl or the old king got to fight, although both characters were murdered during the one "hour traffic" on our outdoor stage. Henry's death scene in the tower was not a good one; it never seemed to work, but Rutland's pleading for his life and eventual murder by the Lancastrian knight, "Bloody" Clifford, was the emotional climax of the show.

The rehearsal process should remain secret, so, let me just say that it was difficult. In order to plead for my life and to die, to find stage combat that would make that death scene work, make people cringe, or even cry, I had to call up memory of my own deep pain and childhood violence. No actor can act if they are not themselves on stage. The feelings belong to the actor, the text to the characters. The actor uses their feelings to make that character come alive through the text and the movement of the character. That is where Shakespeare is truly a genius. His text, either in the simple beauty of iambic pentameter, or the large and sometimes confusing prose, tells the actor where and what they are feeling, doing, and going. Shakespeare's theatre was one that didn't have directors and his plays have survived 400 years because human experience has not changed. That is why he is the most important playwright, and the one that tests our abilities as actors. To speak the text and become the character, to die as Rutland and as Henry, was to experience my own sorrow and hope, and to take my place in a choir of human souls and voices that have echoed these stories for the past four centuries in all corners of the globe. Acting is not being someone else, acting is being yourself. The simplest reminder was a line from our group pieces in *The Rise of Richard III*: "Richard loves Richard, that is I am I." All throughout the workshop we repeated "I am me" as if words of a prayer. In my Basics Class, Tina Packer, my teacher, asked who I was, after "doing" the chorus from *Henry V*. My answer about being the unsexed narrator did not mean a thing when she said, "Annie, it is you. You are the narrator." She made me pull my hair from my face, and peel off layers of sweatshirts,

until I stood there exposed, and for the first time really used my voice, my face and my body to give life to these beautiful words:

Thus far, with rough and all-unable pen,
Our binging author hath pursu'd the story;
In little room confining mighty men,
Mangling by starts the full course of their glory.
Small time, but in that small most greatly lived
This star of England: Fortune made his sword,
By which the world's best garden he achieved,
And of it left his son imperial lord.
Henry the Sixth, in infant bands crown'd King
Of France and England, did this king succeed;
Whose state so many had the managing,
That they lost France and made his England bleed:
Which oft our stage hath shown; and, for their sake,
In your fair minds let this acceptance take.
(*Henry V*, V, ii, 1-14)

It was only the beginning, the tip of the iceberg, as Tina Packer put it. I worked very hard for the remainder of the summer. Some of the performances of *The Rise of Richard III* were not good, but the precision and the beauty of our final show in early September joined us players in that rich and exquisite language to tell the story of family, murder, and war. We all wished that there were more performances.

It was not easy to come home. Except for my boyfriend, whose support will be cherished for the rest of my life, no one in Boston had any idea what I had been through. My three months of training were much harder than the ones put in during graduate school, where the soul was left behind, trampled, if you will by fellow students and professors alike, for the sometimes sterile quest of the mind. In September, I was somewhat of a ragged soldier from Henry V's victorious army. The memory of *Rutland, and Henry VI* needed a test of comedy before I directed anything myself. Given that chance in the *Ever Players* production of *Twelfth Night*, where as Fabian, (played as a woman, Fabiana) I found the joy of scheming and mockery in the delicate game of master-servant.

I miss acting. It's very close to novel writing, in the respect that the writer and actor are the characters they create. (There is a great deal more to be said on this topic, but that is the subject of another essay.) My dream, besides becoming a member of Kristin Linklater's Company of Women, is to establish a Shakespeare Theatre at Lesley, a multi-cultural one, bringing together Education and the Liberal Studies, where the plays can be used as vehicles of change. This will require a great deal of work, and demands the support and cooperation of many people. This year's production of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* is only a step towards that much larger and greater goal. Theatre is rewarding work, in so much as we "do" it to make our souls bigger, to feel more, to understand ourselves, to tell our own story, and in that process to have fun, because Shakespeare is not worth the time and effort if there is no fun in the challenge.

Last fall, at a meeting with colleagues, I had a chance to relate some of my summer experience. When I mentioned the potential growth of the soul that Shakespearean theatre had to offer, there was snickering in the room. Snicker, frown, roll your eyes toward heaven, but we don't address the soul enough in college. It is like love or sex or war, taboo. We often act as if the soul doesn't exist, or should be dealt with someplace else. Not so. The human soul should be fed and nourished and challenged in college; it should be given a safe haven of the familiar where it can grow and change. Why not in Shakespeare's rich and powerful language, in the theatre, the place where we go to be moved, to experience catharsis, where we hear the unspeakable and leave just a little bit different than when we first came in.



I Am
Saskia Grunberger

(the poem that never ends, like the snake biting her own tail)

Iwant to be the first Supermodel, Actress,
Author, Poet, Playwright,
Orator, Speaker, Preacher, Singer,
Sit-Down Dancer,
Photographer, Painter, Sculptor,
Healer, And Wise Woman
who howls at the Full Moon from her Wheelchair
in the dark, cool silence of the Night.
I want ALL the Powers of a Woman
to Create, To Give Birth to, and to Remake myself
however I desire To Be:
Hair, Nails, Body Paint, Clothes,
Bewitching Scents, Enchanting Songs.
Raw Silk and Crushed Velvet:
Warm, so Warm under Fever-Bright Eyes
and forehead and fingertips.
Sweetness and Spice on the lips and on the tongue
of those few brave and daring souls who dare
to kiss my lips or skin and drink of this potion.
Tasting (testing) the possible poison of all the hurt feelings,
broken promises,
and terrifying dreams that have become,
through necessity,
a Serpentine Defense.
(I love the way snakes feel in my hands
entwining themselves slowly up my arms,
curling in my hair,
hissing and swaying to the rhythm of my heart; their poison is my
blood.)

The Spell has begun and
I AM
Whatever I choose to be.

And I choose TO BE.

Do I contradict myself?
Very well then I contradict myself,
(I am large, I contain multitudes.)
Walt Whitman, *Songs of Myself*, 51



The Rape

Anonymous

(At first I was hesitant about submitting this piece and having it get accepted because then people would know. I have decided that it is important that I do, but wish to remain anonymous.)

He was not to be trusted
But how could I tell?
I did not realize what was going on.

I was only seven when he hurt me.
Although I didn't feel it then.
I was a child and he was the adult.

Now I am an adult
And now I feel the pain
I've tried to repress it but it won't go away.

I don't want an apology—it's too late for that
I don't seek revenge
There is nothing that would show him how much he hurt me.

All I need is love and support.
Is that too much to ask?
All I want is to know why he did it
And unless I confront him I know I'll never know.
It's the only way for me to get my questions answered
But after all this time I'm still scared



Stolen Innocence

Moria Claire Harrigan

Dream like intoxication
resisting contact.
Persisting, you penetrate my body
Stealing my essence.

Trembling whirlwind
Agony
Anguish
DARKNESS

Tears cannot cleanse my soul.
Frightened anger cannot be
thrusted from my spirit.
You live in my memory—
a ghost of such odious sin

Victim or Survivor?

Moirra Claire Harrigan

Misery ignites my soul into
flames of red,
orange,
gray,
and
BLACK

I've been RAPED into an unknown dimension of
VIOLENCE, HATE, and ANGER.
Tears wash my eyes—
they do not release me from REALITY.

My struggle is to SURVIVE—
to be stronger than RAPE.



The Agreement

Stephanie Kornfield

An entirely new system was figured out from the beginning.
He would lose
and she would win.

This satisfied the two of them.

That way she would always have something to complain about
and so would he.

Sugar

Ellen Tara Voll

At first I don't want to answer it, but the doorbell keeps ringing. I try to ignore it and concentrate on the paint on my canvas, try to complete this painting before my thoughts go away. The bell won't stop, so I finally go to the intercom.

"Yes, who is it?" I ask.

"Oh good. FINALLY! Open up."

It's Sugar. I push the buzzer and stand by the door waiting for her to climb the three flights of stairs. While I'm waiting I think back to the first time I met Sugar.

I was in boarding school and it was mid-year when she started. Before I had even set eyes on her it seemed as though everyone was talking about her: Did you meet the new girl, Sugar? God, she's got the best hair. Did you see her leather jacket? Do you think that's her real name?

At breakfast her first morning I sat with this mysterious new girl and everyone was stopping and talking to us, stretching out their hands to shake her hand. I felt like I was sitting next to the Queen of England. Finally, Jackson Anderson asked the question we all wanted answered.

"So, is your real name Sugar?"

"Yep," she said between bites of her English muffin. "My mother had a terrible pregnancy with my older brother. She was sick the whole time and I guess he just kicked and kicked the last few months. I guess my mother didn't really want another baby, but—you see, I was an accident. And, surprise—I was this perfect pregnancy. All my mother could say was, 'This baby sure is sweet'. See, my mother is from the South. Says Ya'll and Ma'am, stuff like that. So out

I popped and my father said, 'Well isn't she sweet' and my mother told him, 'Sweet as Sugar'. And hence a few short hours later I was named Sugar Anna Smith.

We all sat there silently listening to her story. We were totally taken in by her strong voice, her short brown hair and the noise her bracelets made when she waved her hands around in the air.

Finally, I quietly interjected and tried to say something so I could get some of her attention.

"So, are your parents married?"

"MARRIED!" She squealed and looked my way. "NO WAY!" Please, are anybody's parents married to each other anymore? Well, except my boyfriend. His name is Evan and he's a senior at Andover. His parents are WONDERFUL. They are practically my IN-LAWS. See, Evan and I are sort of engaged to be engaged." Before she looked away she pointed at my eyes and said,

"You have really pretty eyes. You shouldn't wear blue eyeliner. It is totally out of style and only looks really bad on people with green eyes."

The door flies open and Sugar gives me a giant bear hug.

"Oh God. YOU are an angel. I'm so glad you let me in. You don't understand NO ONE is home. Jenny is visiting her parents. Lisa is at work, I can't find Keith anywhere. Shit—no one is home. Andy and I got in a HUGE fight. This is IT. Really this time I mean it. It's over REALLY!" As Sugar walks over to the living room couch she notices my painting. She stops and puts her hand over her mouth and says,

"Oh God, were you painting? I'm sorry. It's nice though. I know you hate that word nice. But, it is 'nice' you know. Too much black over there though." She says this while pointing to my favorite part of the painting until now.

Sugar goes over to the couch and throws off her full-length fur coat. Under the coat she's wearing cowboy boots, jeans and a silk dress shirt. Her long, dyed-red hair hangs half-way down her back.

"Oh, God. You would have DIED if you saw the cabdriver on my way over here. I swear he looked like he just stepped off Planet of the Apes. I swear. REALLY. Anyway, Andy and I had this huge fight. It was crazy. That girl called again. You know, that one from Rosie's. The BARTENDER? I was SO mad. AND he knew it, so he continued talking while I stood there and I just wanted to KILL him. So after he got off the phone I accused him of having an affair. Which he totally denied. AND then he brought up that stupid New Year's kiss with David Sword. God, if he only knew what happened in the bathroom! But, he doesn't. So, why does he have to be such a JERK! I have never met such a jerk in my whole life," Sugar says digging through her coat pockets looking for cigarettes. Finally she comes up with her Marlboros. She puts one in her mouth and the others on the coffee table.

"Do you have any matches?" She asks as she rummages through her coat pockets again. As I reach over and find a book of them next to my paints she says,

"Oh, forget it. I found my lighter. What do you think I should do about Andy? I mean you are my best friend—we've known each other for years. What should I do?"

I remember the night before I dropped out of college, Sugar came into my room to say goodbye. I was sleeping and she climbed into my bed. She started crying into my pillow and between sobs she whined,

"What the hell am I going to do without you? After three years of boarding school and two years of college, we have only been apart during the summer and when I went to Paris last spring."

"Don't worry," I told her. You can come visit me in New York

whenever you want. I'll write—just like Paris. Remember how often I wrote you in Paris?"

I know. But it's different this time. YOU are leaving ME. No one knows me as well as you do. Well, except for that guy Paul I fell in love with in Paris. NO ONE!" She cried.

My painting is going nowhere when Sugar decides it's time for us to go out and get a drink.

"Sugar," I tell her. "I don't know. I want to finish this tonight. Joel is coming up tomorrow and I never get any work done when he is here," I whine.

"Please. Pretty please...Just one, I PROMISE. By then Lisa will be out of work. C'mon. Just one?"

"Okay. Just one. AND I have to take a shower."

"Great!", she says, running over to my closet. "No overalls, you have to get dressed up."

"Sugar, it's just one drink!", I yell to her from the bathroom as I strip off my clothes.

"No overalls. That's final! Your butt looks huge in them. Not that you have a huge butt. Well, you know what I mean. You have so many beautiful clothes in here. Why don't you wear any of them? Hurry up in the shower. YOU ARE SO SLOW."

As I get in the shower I let the water relax my muscles and drown out Sugar's voice.

I can remember when Sugar first moved to New York. It was seven months ago. At first she stayed at my apartment. I would come home from work, and she would be getting in from some nightclub. We would sit on the bed in our underwear in front of the fan. Sugar

would tell me about some beautiful man she had just met and I would tell her how much I missed Joel. And despite the heat we would eventually fall asleep.

As I get out of the shower I can hear Sugar talking softly on the phone. From the tone of her voice I can tell it's Andy. I pull on the clothes she has laid out for me. I start brushing my hair when I hear a slight knocking on the door.

"Come in, Sugar," I tell her.

She comes in and sits on the edge of the bathtub.

"Ummm, Carrie—You're going to kill me, but I just talked to Andy. He was so sweet. He said he's sorry and he wants me to come home. He asked if I wanted to go home and order Chinese and hang out and talk. I'm sorry, Carrie. You know it's important. If it wasn't important I wouldn't blow you off. You understand, don't you?"

"Yeah," I tell her. "That's fine. I really want to finish this painting."

"Oh, Carrie! You are the GREATEST! Really, I mean it!"

Sugar runs across the room and puts on her coat, gathers her belongings and runs back to me and gives me a kiss on the cheek.

"I love you, Carrie. Have fun with Joel. Good luck with your painting. Thanks for being here for me—you always are. I'll call you."

And with that she flies through the door as fast as she came in. I'm alone here with my painting, just like I was only minutes before.

Lovers

Stephanie Anne Ruediger

Two women united
By love for each other
One is alone
One belongs to another.
Reaching out to take hold
Bound by desire
Neither has fear
Of being burned by the fire.
Meeting at the junction
Where reality and fantasy cross
Both knowing the danger
Understanding the cost.
The passion that they share
Is like a newly found toy
They ignore the risk
And its power to destroy.
Joined by their souls
In mutual alliance
In the face of truth
They respond with defiance.
Together but alone
Different but the same
They will not be dissuaded
By honour or by shame.
In the end it cannot be
So's the rule of fate
One will be alone again
The other will return to her mate
But for a moment there is nothing
Save for the desire which they share
And though the risks are many
They don't seem to care.
For they're living in the moment
Enjoying what they've found
They've got some time yet
Before they must touch the ground.

Venus Rising

Donna Cole

My twenty year old son has fallen in love. We knew something extraordinary was happening when he suggested that Lisa come for dinner. Other girlfriends had appeared at the house—for prom pictures, watching TV, putting up the Christmas tree—but, in fact, this was the first girl “invited for dinner.”

She appeared, slim, with milky skin, a splendid halo of shining red-blond hair actually glowing in the lights of our Christmas tree and candles—Venus Rising!—on our staircase!

That evening—what a delight to watch them—he looking only at her, she praising my lemon pie. “Yes, Mom makes a mean lemon pie,” says he—and another family myth is born. Look at my husband—how expansive he is, telling the old joke about the portrait of great-grandfather whose expression admonishes the viewer to “eat your vegetables” and launching into a genealogy of the Coles. He slips easily into the language and manner of his father, who had told me the same stories. My daughter, a little sister, eyes the couple coldly. “He loves her so much—it’s disgusting,” she whispers.

They surprise me one Saturday afternoon. I am dressed in sweat pants, sweat shirt, rubber gloves, down on all fours, scrubbing the kitchen floor. “Don’t come in!, I say. “It’s wet.”

“I love your hair,” she says. “Did you get it cut?” I look at them—the proud young man and the beautiful young woman, addressing the, possibly, prospective mother-in-law.

Wait! Wait a minute! It’s all wrong! I’m not the *mother-in-law*! My husband’s mother is, Marge is! I’m the young woman, I’m the young wife!

Later my son announces he is moving out of our house and into an apartment with three other young men. We discuss his plans and I tell him how much I had wanted to be on my own as a college student. In amazingly rapid progression he paints his room (for his little sister to inherit), packs up his stuff and hauls it downstairs. As he takes a final load out to his car, his father and I issue a “standing invitation” for Sunday night dinner. He gives one last look at his childhood bedroom and by God he is gone. Oh, he’s gone alright—gone to the arms of Love.

Untitled

Bharati Samnani

(This poem describes my confusion between my boyfriend and me. Our relationship ended the following day.)

A hollow in my heart
Deepening and widening as time flicks by
The waves engulf my emptiness
Waves of pitch black chaos
Disrupting the calm ocean of serenity
I want to escape this calamity—this danger
This danger of risking myself into nothingness
I want to get out of the hollow in my heart.

Untitled

MSG

Lust is for ever
my heart has been shelved
so bind me in leather
and give me your hell
I tried to be honest
I tried to be real
my lifes just to touch
let some other fool feel

Untitled
Carma Rorke

See the tears well up in my eyes
Feel them fall one by one
Onto your trembling hand
I see the fear in your eyes
Fear of the harsh truth that is revealing
Its face to you
Hear the cries of grief
Hear the cries of anger
See the look of disbelief on my face
You try to comfort me with an embrace
But you are cold
Like my heart
Before it breaks
The beauty is dead
The innocence shattered
A vital flower
Plucked from its stem
Only to be tossed
Carelessly to the ground

De Velera's Moon

Part Two

Joan E. Dolamore

He could feel the bag slipping out of his arm as he turned onto the walk. It was raining and the bag was wet and his yellow slicker was too slippery for the cheap Stop and Shop plastic. As it slid down, he remembered the eggs that the boy at the supermarket had pushed down to the bottom of the bag. I should have stopped him then, Jake thought as the bag hit the brick walk. I should have made him move the bloody eggs to the top. Looking down at the bag, Jake felt the rain begin to seep between the collar of the slicker and his neck. He barely resisted the urge to kick the bag across the lawn, feeling somehow that the act would vindicate Laura's anger instead of his.

She was probably warm right now, curled up in bed, not giving him a thought. Jake frowned as he shifted the pile of books he was carrying from one arm to the other, grabbed the bag and headed once more up the walk. When he got to the door, he stopped and looked at the sea pounding the beach at the end of the street. Laura loved this scene, he thought, remembering the first time he had brought her down to the Cape. She was from land-locked New Mexico and was continually fascinated by the Massachusetts Coast. When she saw how close the house was to the ocean, she had smiled and, with her eyes sparkling and that slow, deep smile still on her face, had turned to Jake, humming "By the Sea, By the Sea, By the Beautiful Sea." That was the moment, he supposed, he first realized she was "the one" and not just another practice run for the real thing. No, he thought, as he opened the door, Laura was the real thing. Or at least she was until two days ago when she had done a fairly good imitation of "the not even in the ballpark real thing even if you thought she was."

Jake was still frowning as he walked into the kitchen, remembering Saturday and the fight that had sent him driving hell bent for the Cape. It wasn't his fault, he thought, slamming the bag and books down on the counter! I wasn't forcing her to get married! It wasn't my

idea to hire the hall, hire the band, involve my mother! Jake stood there, his hands spread out on the kitchen counter, dancing from one foot to the other as he thought of each and every thing he should have said to Laura, instead of the things he did say. In his mind, he was calm and reasonable, pointing out to Laura, with impeccable logic of course, how it had been her idea to involve his mother in the wedding plans. Laura, though, couldn't be counted on to listen to logic, Jake thought shaking his head. No, she went right for the emotional jugular vein and held on like a damn terrier! He reached into the bag to pull out the groceries, thinking that it was a good thing he had seen this side of Laura before the wedding. Then he pulled the dripping eggs from the bag. Slamming the bag down on the counter had not been the best idea, especially after dropping the bag outside. One more thing he could lay at Laura's doorstep, no omelet for breakfast.

Jake opened the fridge and grabbed a beer. He went into the living room and flopped down on the couch, staring at the deck outside. The rain was pooling in the middle of the table and running in rivulets to the edge. It all started with that silly picture, he thought, of him and Laura laughing in the rain. They had come down to the Cape to celebrate their fifth anniversary of being together and it had poured from Saturday morning until they left on Sunday night. Laura didn't care. She insisted that the week go as planned, sun or no sun. So they had gone swimming, played miniature golf, and sat on the deck in their swimsuits, drinking gin and tonics. There was a picture of them laughing, drinks in hand, at the bottom of their bed in Boston. Jake had framed the picture, and given it to Laura with a note saying, marry me, I need to drink gin and tonics in the rain with you when I'm 90. We were happy then, Jake thought, lifting his beer in silent salute to the deck. That, of course, was before the wedding from hell went into production.

Jake had wanted a small wedding. Well to be truthful, he thought, I wanted a non-wedding. For sure I didn't want four coffee-pots, Aunt Winnie singing yet another tuneless rendition of Ave Maria, and my mother at my doorstep every waking moment. Laura

and he had not had a moment's peace in weeks. Between her schoolwork, his promotion, and the wedding, time together had been reduced to brief good-nights. Too brief by half, he mused. Laura had wanted them to live apart the last week before the wedding, to add spice to the wedding night, she had said. After five years living together, Jake had not relished the idea of sleeping alone. It felt like that anyway, he thought, getting up from the couch and walking over to the sliding glass doors. If she wasn't talking to his mother about the caterer or the hall or the dress alterations, she was reading articles on initiation rites or sleeping. Jake felt she viewed their wedding as an initiation rite, something she had to get through to be accepted into the family. No that wasn't quite right. She was already accepted, and loved, by his three brothers and his father.

Jake remembered the exact day that had happened. Laura and he had been living together for about a year and they were at the annual McFee-O'Malley family picnic. Jake's mother, who represented the O'Malley side, and Jake's father, who proudly called himself a McFee, had started the picnic the second year they were married, in 1954. Since they were both from big families, the picnic had started out big, and had grown bigger with each passing year. The year Jake first brought Laura, there were 172 people there, and that wasn't even the whole family. There had always been a friendly rivalry between the O'Malleys and the McFees, which coalesced each year around the End-Of-The-Picnic Softball Game. The O'Malley's, led by Jake's Uncle Tim, had bested the McFees for the previous four years. Jake's dad and brothers were determined to wrest the title back that year.

They were leading 2-0 until the bottom of the 7th, when Tim's son, Connor, grounded to second and brought Cousin John home. By the bottom of the 8th, the McFees were down 2-4. Laura, of course, had been in the game from the beginning. The rule was that anyone who wanted could play, as long as they could hit the ball and catch anything that was thrown. Laura had proven capable on both counts, having played baseball in high school. Of course, at just the right

moment, at the top of the 9th, Laura had hit one out of the field, bringing Jake, his brother Marty, and herself home. She had won the game and the eternal gratitude of the McFee men. Jake could still see her at the plate, wiggling her butt and laughing at the crowd. Then she had turned to him on third base, winked and nodded her head, and slammed the ball passed Uncle Tim, passed Connor, right into the pond. She had danced her way all around the plates, thumbing her nose at Uncle Tim and Connor as she went by. Jake's father had laughed so hard, he cried.

But Jake's mother had proven just a bit tougher to win over, even five years and many baseball games later. Jake had told Laura about his mother's reputation as the Irish Piranha, but Laura had refused to believe it. He had been joking, of course, his mother didn't really eat her sons' girlfriends for breakfast. But he also knew that his mother had strict, unwritten rules for the girls the McFee men brought home. They should be Irish, they should be from Boston, and they should be Catholic. Laura had three strikes against her from the beginning.

But she didn't strike out with me, Jake thought, pushing off from the glass door and walking into the kitchen for another beer. I was real easy to win over. She had me from the beginning, from the first time I saw her at Eryn's party. She had been talking to Bill, Eryn's then boyfriend, when Jake entered the room. He was intending to go over to Bill and be introduced when Eryn spotted him and ran over for a hug. The party was to celebrate her graduation and Jake stood talking to her for a while. Soon he was laughing at something Eryn said and when he looked up, Laura was walking across the room, straight toward him. All he was aware of was how straight she walked, how long her legs looked, and how clear and steady her eyes were as she drew nearer. Eryn introduced them and then sort of faded away. At least, Jake couldn't really remember whether or not Eryn had remained once Laura started to speak. We talked almost all night, Jake thought, uncapping his beer. We went back to her place and just talked. Jake still was amazed at that fact, five years later. And we

talked the next time we went out, and the time after that. In fact, Jake was convinced that all they would ever do was talk, until one night Laura invited him over for dinner, and when he got there, asked him what he wanted for breakfast.

And that was it, Jake thought, walking into the living room and opening the glass door. I've been hers ever since. If she just hadn't agreed to marry me, none of this would have happened! I'd still be curled up beside her in Boston, instead of alone on the Cape. Jake turned and stomped back into the living room. He grabbed the remote and turned on the game. But baseball only reminded him of Laura. Jake clicked off the TV and thought again of the fight. It had started over coffee. Laura had asked him to buy some and he had forgotten. But it had really started weeks before, he thought, because of the wedding and my mother. Jake could see how exhausted Laura was, he could see that his mother was driving her crazy with her "helpful" comments and suggestions about the wedding, but he simply said nothing. Partly it was because he was busy with his new job. Jake twisted uncomfortably on the couch, knowing that that wasn't the real reason. He simply hadn't wanted the wedding. He hadn't wanted the fuss. He thought that he would simply ask Laura to marry him and that, magically, they would be married. That he would somehow wake up the next morning, ring on his finger, Jake McFee, married man.

Well, Jake thought, getting up from the couch, I certainly don't have to worry about getting married now. Not after Saturday's fight. Especially not after I told Laura she had no backbone and that if she wanted to be a McFee, she would just have to learn how to stand up to my mother. Jake winced as he remembered Laura's sarcastic reply that she would learn just as soon as he did. That remark was soon followed up by her reference to his mother as a boa constrictor, squeezing the life out of their wedding. Right after that, Jake had slammed out of the house and sped to the Cape. Two days later, he was still waiting for Laura to show up and apologize. Because I'm certainly not going to, Jake thought with a scowl, as he went once more

into the kitchen.

But the kitchen offered no solace; neither did the living room or the deck. It was still raining, in fact it was raining even harder than when he had arrived. It was dark now, and he couldn't see the ocean, he could only hear it. He stood on the deck in the rain for a long time, listening to the sea. And he thought about Laura, the first time he met her and the last time he saw her. She hadn't been happy, Jake thought, and I wasn't helping much to make things better. He looked up at the night sky through the rain and suddenly remembered the first time Laura and he had gone camping. She had been terrified; she hadn't admitted it of course, but he could tell. He had distracted her by making up names for the stars. He still remembered how she had laughed a year later when she found out that the North Star was not really called DeVelera's Moon.

And she'll eventually laugh about our fight, Jake thought. In 20 years, we'll still be laughing about it. That is, Jake thought coming in from the deck and shaking the water off of himself, if I can get my sorry butt up to Boston and apologize, as I should have done yesterday and the day before. He glanced at his watch; it was almost midnight. How many beers have I had? Too many, Laura's voice said inside his head, to drive to Boston in the rain at midnight. Well, I could call her, Jake thought, reaching for the phone. But his hand stopped just a few inches from the receiver as he remembered the look on her face when he walked out two days ago. That look needs more than a phone call, he thought. A lot more. Like talking to your mother, Laura said again in his head. Jake sighed as he stripped off his wet clothes and walked into the bedroom. I suppose it is time I talked to mom, he thought as he climbed into bed.

Jake had intended to only take a short nap, but the two beers had made him more tired than he realized and it was 6:00 before he opened his eyes again. When he saw what time it was, he was out of bed like a shot. He quickly pulled on clean clothes, ran into the kitchen and put all the groceries, including the eggs, into the fridge, and jammed his wet clothes into the empty grocery bag. Fifteen minutes

after he jumped out of bed, he was reversing the car out of his driveway. On his way to Boston, Jake thought of all the things he needed to say to Laura, and all the things he should say. Like it's my wedding too, he thought. That's something I haven't said yet, and I bet it's something Laura would like to hear. And my mother. She needs to hear it too. But how to tell Laura, Jake thought. He knew that whatever he did, it had to be special, if for no other reason than to begin to repair the damage from the fight. Then Jake remembered what had caused the fight, he had forgotten to pick up coffee. Laughing out loud, Jake suddenly knew what to do. I'll pick up a can of coffee, he thought, and some Irises. Laura intended them to be her bridal bouquet and that had led to her first confrontation with Jake's mother, who thought the idea decidedly not Irish and not Catholic.

It was still pouring rain when Jake got to Boston and he was dripping wet when he stepped onto the elevator, a can of coffee in one hand and a bunch of Irises in the other. He wasn't smiling and he wasn't happy. The drive up had been too long and it had taken him a while to find the flowers. It was 8:30 and he was sure Laura had already left for the day. She won't be here, he thought, she'll have gone off still angry and by 5:00, neither the flowers or the coffee will matter. And then the elevator doors opened on their floor and there was Laura, car keys in hand, nightgown trailing halfway to the floor out of her bag. They looked at each other for a long moment and then slowly, Laura smiled.



Statement of Teaching Philosophy

Teresa Meile

I teach
and so
I touch the world
one child at a time.

And that's a lot, and
I'm very glad about that.

What I say to children,
the way I treat them
and their peers
affects them
everyday
and maybe for a l—o—n—g time after they
last see my face.

Wow.

What they remember about me and school should be good,
because there are a lot of good things in this world
to know about
and so many kids only know
the bad.

School should be a place where they are safe
whether they are safe at home—or not.
They should be able to grow and be themselves
because being you is the best thing you can be (really!).

And even though everyone of us is the same a lot,
every one of us is wonderfully different a lot
and that's what *really* makes us special.
(I'm sure about this...)

And not every parent or teacher thinks that way—
but I do!—because no child should *have* to be like
everyone else, because by virtue of birth into this world
they already *are* in the only way they should be...

Children need to know what it means to be respected,
so they may learn to respect...

What it means to have a friend, so they can be a friend...

What it means to help and guide, so that they may help and guide
others...

What it means to be cared about, so that they may care—etcetera!

They need to be challenged, because they are always smarter than
we seem to give them credit for.

They need to be supported, because sometimes we give them a
little *too* much credit. After all, they are new at this thing called life
(and don't we wish we were?)

And life can take some getting used to.

And so, I'm there to help them with that. Because I touch lives.

I teach.

I Went to a Trustee Meeting (And I Survived)

Holly Ireland

Ordinarily, going to a meeting would not be a traumatic experience, but this one was different. It comforts me to realize that this ulcer-inducing, nerve-wracking event was one milestone in the rite of passage that all must endure. I suppose I should explain...

Ah, the Trustees. The people with whom I shared a bonding experience, a learning experience, and an ultimate experience. Of course, a lot is stated in my personal decision to capitalize the "T" in Trustees. From the very first time I heard about the Trustees it was said as if the whole word should be in **bold**, underlined, ENTIRELY IN CAPITAL LETTERS, perhaps *highlighted* and most definitely whispered in an awestruck tone.

Before innocently venturing to this meeting, I had completely underestimated the importance of the Trustees. I mean, I knew these women were to be respected and admired, but I did not know that I would be face-to-face with the major benefactors of the College. When I met them, I casually and ignorantly read their nametags from across the room. My eye was caught by one lady's nametag, and as I stared fixedly, I attempted to place the hauntingly familiar name. I was thinking and thinking, and trying so hard to remember who this lady was, when lightning flashed within my brain and I recognized the name. It was the visualization of my friends and myself lounging around in Charlie's that brought it home. She was the Student Center Lady!! And as I met each of the women, *the* places on campus became personified. As I continued to think of all the possible plaqued places on campus, I humorously wondered what could explain Edith Wolfard Lesley's absence.

I wasn't necessarily dreading this meeting before I had to go, but that's innocence in a nutshell for ya. But the day of the meeting, I had the butterflies all right. I was prepared; I had my speech in hand, I was dressed up (yuck) and most importantly, I was on my best behavior. Thankfully my ol' friend Katie Kelley, was playing the part of the advisor, the comforter, the supporter, and attended this meeting. Unfortunately, it took her awhile to warm up to her role. When

I stumbled over to Student Affairs in my high heels to meet her, she looked even more discombobulated than I did. The first words out of her mouth were, "So, you nervous?" Thanks, Katie, for your faithful support. No, I'm not nervous, I think it's fun to shake like a leaf.

Dressing up, in my own humble opinion, is not fun. I do not like it, nor do I pretend to like it. I guess it feels good when millions of people compliment you, but doesn't a compliment lack validity if your usual attire is the unshowered look with very dirty and wrinkled clothes and a flannel tossed across your bedridden T-shirt? Dave, the temporary receptionist in Student Affairs (why do we still refer to him as the temp when he's been here for ages?) coaxed me into a mini-fashion show. Though humiliating to spin around in my most comfortable green dress, I did have an extra spring to my stumble after the fuss made over my outfit.

Katie and I left the comfortable womb of Student Affairs for the cruel and harsh environment of—gasp—the Cafeteria Conference Room!! We're early. No one is here yet. I hate to be early!! I've been known to drive around aimlessly to avoid being early to work. And on occasion I've accidentally gotten lost and ended up very late instead.

As people finally begin to enter, I am grappling with the age-old question: to shake or not to shake. I was seriously stressing over this choice, perhaps I was making a mountain out of a molehill but it seemed crucial at the time. I have never gotten this rule of etiquette mastered—maybe this is the time in my life to write to Miss Manners. I opted for the no-shake because it was just too pushy to stand up, walk around the table and the fifteen chairs that have been crammed into a room the size of a prison cell, reach out and gently, but confidently, pump their right hand. And what if I broke their nail or something horrid like that? So, instead I sat up in my chair with a Mona Lisa posture and smile.

As greetings were being thrown around the room, I decided to be a fly on the wall, listening to various conversations. I fully and completely admire the ability for non-stop talking that these ladies possess. And I thought *I* could talk. They quickly became my talking

idols as I pondered if they were in training, in case talking becomes an Olympic sport.

I was enjoying my experience as a fly as I picked up and chose which conversations to eavesdrop upon, and I settled on one that mentioned food services. I heard one lady tell her friend about food services and the rotten food they received on their plates back then. I was all ready to jump in, enthusiastically agreeing about the indigestible cafeteria food when she said, "Yes, indeed, we certainly had something to complain about, but these girls now should be so grateful for the food on their plates!" Whew, did I have to breathe deeply to digest that whopper of a misunderstanding of our modern cafeteria service, but I managed to bite my tongue.

The chair of the committee attempted to begin the meeting. As the first agenda item was being discussed, another well-dressed, thin and happy woman entered, a bit late. Out of the corner of my ear (I was torn; listen to the intended topic of the meeting or listen to the lady's excuse for being late) I distinctly heard, "Oh, I apologize for being late, ha ha, but that's the peril of driving a Jaguar. Oh well." Gee, maybe I should try that line the next time I'm twenty minutes late to class.

The meeting proceeded, and I just could not relax. The women were entirely warm, welcoming and generous as could be, but my stomach was in knots and nothing besides antacid could cure this ache. I think it might have been as nerve-wracking as finals, and I know I felt like I was taking some kind of weird test, like a culminating "Manners" final in home economics. Was there a video camera spying on my behavior that would be later played for my seventh grade home-ec teacher who sealed my domestic fate by giving me a C-minus on my draft dodger? I was so petrified that I'd reach for the wrong fork, or take someone else's glass or start eating before everyone else, or even break some heralded rule of etiquette that I'm too boorish to even know about!

I am convinced that eating is, hands down, the worst part of a fancy gathering. There are so many opportunities to flounder and blatantly advertise yourself as the second cousin of a true Neanderthal. Not only is the utensil situation usually a serious problem, but these were sandwiches. To cut in half or risk behaving like a barbarian

while attempting to eat it all in one piece? I did that sly glance and cool use of the peripheral vision to check out what everyone else was doing with her croissant.

I affirmed that it was acceptable to use my fingers, as long as I was delicate and careful with the croissant. I noticed that everyone else was finished before I was, and my picking at that croissant was turning it into a crumbling mess. I can't even eat finger food correctly! So I took a huge plunge and finished the damn thing so I could move on and forget about the eating disaster.

Finally, in the midst of all my personal challenges, I no longer had to be silent, but my golden opportunity to speak arose. Along with the other crises of the meeting, I had been internally sweating about my presentation. The pressure that existed is something parallel to when you're in a submarine at the bottom of the ocean. This was the time to prove my identity! This one measly leap for success wasn't even my planned presentation because we ran out of time for that. I had to wing it, to break out of the mold and conquer that unexpected mountain that had suddenly thrust itself in my path! These are impressive women and my quest was to show my stuff and prove to myself that I'm not just a kid, but a valuable, intelligent and capable person on the verge of becoming a professional.

When the women asked my opinion of The Learning Center on campus, the room became silent, anxiously awaiting my wise words on the supplementary educational facilities at Lesley. I didn't shy away from this opportunity but plunged forth with my efforts to sink the ball thirteen seconds before the end of the game, to bring the score over the edge and win the title! I managed to reply with verbal acuity and abundant professionalism, "I am under the impression that The Learning Center has increased its publicity drastically within the last few years." A pause occurred and I interjected in response to my own statement, "Of course, I've only been here just as long, so what do I know?" *So what do I know?* Augghh! The ball just bounced off the rim, the game was lost. My first and only chance at celebrity status was floundered and blown away. All my efforts weren't lost in my dimwitted statement, because I was rewarded with laughter, and that's not so bad.

I finally got to leave this specimen of a meeting, although I left with mixed feelings. I don't think these ladies realized what a terrible predicament I was in throughout that eon with them. My fingernails were non-existent, my stomach was flipping, my feet hurt, and I was still hungry because I hadn't wanted to be a pig.

Although I suffered a substantial amount of psychological wounds, I was also rewarded with the opportunity to spend time with excellent role models, enjoy their sense of humor, and methods of conducting business.

I'm eager for the next meeting to roll around, because with the butterflies absent I'm sure I'll have a lot more fun.



Senior Investiture Poem

Sharon Romeo

*Congratulations!
Today is your day.
You're off to Great Places!
You're off and away!
(Dr. Seuss, Oh, The Places We Will Go!)*

Yes, your feet are just itching to walk out the door.
So let's take a moment to reflect here some more.
On all the places you've seen, all the people you've met,
Your years here at Lesley you won't soon forget.

Communing, you came, across the river by bridge,
From Arlington, Lexington, Somerville, Cambridge,
Boston, Newton, Burlington, Bedford,
Framingham, Woburn, Lowell and Medford,
Cape Cod and North Attleboro weren't even too far,
Whether by bus or by T, train, foot, or car.

Some of you came here to live in a dorm;
From all over the world you took Lesley by storm!
Japan, Puerto Rico and Canada are some
Of the places you left to come to Cambridge from.
From the mountains of Oregon to the sea coast of Maine,
Whether you drove many miles or flew in by plane,
From six New England states, Illinois, Pennsylvania,
New Jersey, New York—you even left Florida?
Lesley College beckoned and brought us together
Though we weren't all prepared for this strange Boston weather!

What events we've had—orientation was the start,
When we all met each other and shared from the heart.
We began to make friends and we tried to learn names
As we took over Hale in our group-bonding games.

From then on our activities would never slow down;
Denny Dent, Livingston Taylor, Jean Kilbourne came to town,
Some visitors brought knowledge; others entertainment to bring,

Why just last year we had Suzanne Vega to sing!

Twelfth Night and *The Merchant of Venice* were our plays,
And this year, as seniors, we count down 100 days!
In fall, winter and spring we've had such goings-on
We'd need several days to recount a list this long.

October's the month, Head-of-the-Charles the race,
We cheered for the rowers from first to last place.
November and December we ate holiday dinner,
Thanks to Carmen and Judy, we didn't get any thinner!

February's the month when Black History's the thing,
Whether we celebrated Haiti or remembered Dr. King.
March is the time for rejoicing in women
And recognizing the gifts to our world they have given.

By April we'd really like to be outside tanning,
But, usually, for all our exams we are cramming.
In May we're elated drive-in movies are shown,
As we're finishing exams and preparing to go home.

Then summer is gone in the blink of an eye,
So we're back in September for our barbecue and tie-dye.

Now we didn't plan all these events on our own,
For folks in Student Affairs were always reachable by phone,
And their door's always open—no need to ring the bell—
They're ready with a smile—we'll all miss Sally L.
Katie, Elisa, Adrienne, Carolyn, Nancy and Jen,
Were right by our side, no matter what, where or when.

While the action on campus always seemed to be great,
Just think of what's happened in the world up to date!
We lived through a war, in a gulf near Iraq,
We'll surely never forget the first U.S. attack.
Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, the U.S.S.R.,
Are now countries divided—and it's not over by far.
The Olympic Games of '92 came quickly and went,

And, of course, in the White House, sits a new President!

Clinton's election we remember here still,
For our own Margaret McKenna, she left to help Bill!
Education Reform was her task in D.C.
But she missed us at Lesley, so she returned with full speed.

In fashion and music, some took the 70's plunge
While others opted for this new thing called, grunge?
Yes, we've seen many changes and become more aware
But nothing could tarnish our beloved Harvard Square!

A stroll through the Garage, or street performers by night,
If AuBon Pain wasn't calling, Pinocchio's might.
Stopping in at the Coop or for a drink at a bar,
Dinner at Chili's, or laughs at Catch a Rising Star,
From the Out-of-Town-Newsstand to the Red Line subway,
Harvard Square's been a constant, both by night and by day.

Yes, for some of us the Square's where our world has been centered,
But for others, it was to D.C. and England they ventured.
Washington and Bradford were where they held studies,
But they came back to Lesley, 'cause they missed all their buddies!

Oh, what teachers we've had—yes, remember them, there's a few,
They filled us with knowledge and we learned something too!
The list is quite long—we'd love to name them all twice,
But for now, our two speakers and the directors will suffice.

"Sweet" Dr. Pluto has been our class advisor,
Annie got our play off the ground, and in class made us wiser.
Bill Holt's made us think: to opening our eyes he's been devoted,
For this, we are grateful; his efforts we've noted.

Carolyn Wyatt came to Lesley the same year as our class,
She revamped Education, so our teaching standards would pass.
In Management we've been led, assuredly, by Allyn Morrow,
When we enter the real world, her techniques we will borrow.

Robin Roth became our Human Services head:
On her expertise and experience we've eagerly been fed.
And of all our directors, let's not forget Dr. T.,
Who on our first day of school went on a photographing spree!
Steven Trainor we'll also remember for his fine teaching methods;
After all, he introduced us to Leadership and Ethics!

In administration, there's been a few changes we've seen
But how can we go wrong with Carol and Daryl for a team?
When troubled or confused, unsure of who to appease,
Just find Mary Norberg—she solves problems with ease !

All of these people, and professors galore,
Could not have provided us with anything more.
They've worked hard to give us a good education:
We can take on the world with our Lesley foundation!

We've established our place at Lesley—look at the clubs we have
joined!

Some of them even have names we have coined!
From LIIF, LINC, Emerald Key, SAC, Third Wave
To AHANA, *Commonthought*—all our efforts we gave.
Don't forget Catholic Community, SOAR, and Hillel
We turned SGA into a Senate, that's working out well.

When we first arrived here sports were few and far between.
Now besides soccer and softball, we've added a tennis team.
Cross-country running we've added on, too.
And now, just this fall, we even have crew!

Just stop for a moment and think for a while,
And when you reflect upon all we've accomplished here, SMILE!
We've achieved many goals, since we first entered Welch's door,
So congratulations to you, Class of Nineteen-Ninety-Four.

Sometime down the road when it's your classmates you miss,
You can take yourself back even quicker than this.
Even if every dime of your money's been spent,
You'll always have your memories of what Lesley College has
meant.

Musings

Julie Grimmer

The dark, velvet blanket of heaven above
is scattered with millions of tiny, sparkling diamonds
each of which has found a home
in the eye of a dreamer below.

This sparkle in the eye of the dreamer
is merely a far away star's reflection
on a pane of the window to the soul.

Like a simmering volcano, the soul oft erupts within
and sets the dreamer's body afire with passion.

A passion which floods the surrounding "lands"
as does a river overflowing its banks.

Refreshing and replenishing, this passion quenches
an innate need often unrecognized and thus unsatiated.

The crucial difference is simple—
without satiation, survival is possible,
living is not.



Untitled

King-Kwan Kathy Cheng

(Written for Annie Pluto's Contemporary Ethnic Literature class, Spring 1992.)

Sacrifice, struggle, barrier, education, responsibility, trap, family, hard work, prejudice, advantage, disadvantage are a list of words that came to mind when I thought of my family's immigrant experience as well as the immigrant/first generation American experience portrayed in *The Woman Warrior* by Maxine Hong-Kingston and *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros.

My family immigrated to the United States from Hong Kong fourteen years ago. It was much harder for my parents, especially my mother, to adapt to a new culture and to a new life because she did not have any relatives or friends in America. Most of her relatives and family members are either in Hong Kong or in England. As for us, the children, immigrating to a new country was an exciting experience. I was eight, my sister was five, and my baby brother was only three months old. My sister and I were very excited. It was the first time we rode on the plane, and we fought for the window seat.

As Maxine Hong Kingston mentioned in *The Woman Warrior*, America has been full of machines and ghosts—Taxi Ghosts, Bus Ghosts, Police Ghosts, Tree Trimming Ghosts, Five-and-Dime Ghosts (97). When we first arrived in this country we felt the same way. Americans (who were not Chinese) were ghosts to us because they do not speak our language and look different. Maybe we were ghosts to them as well. I love to observe these ghosts because I was fascinated by their appearance, various eye, hair, and skin colors. We called them "bart quite", white ghosts. Some of the white and black ghosts were kind and polite to us. Others were mean and rude. For example, they would make fun of my sister and me because we did not speak the ghost language, English.

Every immigrant family has to make some kind of sacrifice when they leave their own country and immigrate to a new country.

For instance, Brave Orchid sacrificed her life of luxury and respectable career as a doctor in China to come to America to live with her husband. Even though she disliked this country, she worked hard all her life to support her family.

This is a terrible ghost country, where a human being works her life away. I have not stopped working since the day the ship landed. I was on my feet the moment the babies were out. In China I never even had to hang my own clothes. I should not have left, but your father could not have supported you without me. (Hong-Kingston 104)

Another example of an immigrant woman who made a sacrifice was Mamacita in *The House on Mango Street*. She left her family, friends, culture and country in order to be with her husband in America. Her husband obviously loved her very much because he worked two jobs so he could save enough money to bring her and their baby boy to this country. However, she was homesick and lonely.

She sits all day by the window and plays the Spanish radio show and sings all the homesick songs about her country in a voice that sounds like a seagull (Cisneros 77).

In addition, she has a sense of not belonging in the American society due to the language barrier and cultural differences.

As for my parents, the reason they immigrated to the United States was because they wanted us to have a better and brighter future. They also wanted us to have a chance to go to college. Minorities like my parents, who don't speak English and have a limited education, were even at a more disadvantaged socioeconomic position. Some employers, especially Chinese employers, would take advantage of their employees by paying them lower wages and offered limited promotion opportunities. Both of my parents have low-paying jobs and work very hard to support our family. Sometimes my mom would come home very tired. She'd sit on the sofa and fall asleep without knowing it. I will always remember the sacrifice my parents made for us.

Education plays a very important role in most immigrant families, and especially in my family. My mother and father often reminded us the value of a good education. They said, "education is the key to a brighter future." If you have a college degree, it is likely that you have a better chance for career advancement. More importantly, you could have a career of your own interest/choice. Whereas we are stuck in our jobs even though we hate them because we have no other available options. To some people, I might look like a super nerd without any social life because I study hard and do well in college. I do it not only for myself, but also for my parents because they never had the chance to attend college. In addition, getting a good education is a way of repaying them for the sacrifices they made for my sibling and me. Moreover, I need to keep up my GPA in order to maintain my scholarship.

Maxine Hong-Kingston used education as a way to gain respect from her parents. She's very smart and did extremely well in school. Respect was very important to Kingston. She wanted to prove to her parents that she was just as good as their sons. When she failed to get the respect she wanted, she gave up. She simply said, "I stopped getting straight A's" (Hong-Kingston 47).

As for Esperanza Cordero in *The House on Mango Street*, education was an alternative for her to free herself from the trap of Mango Street.

I will pack my bags of books and paper. One day I will say good-bye to Mango. I am too strong for her to keep me here forever. One day I will go away (Cisneros 110).

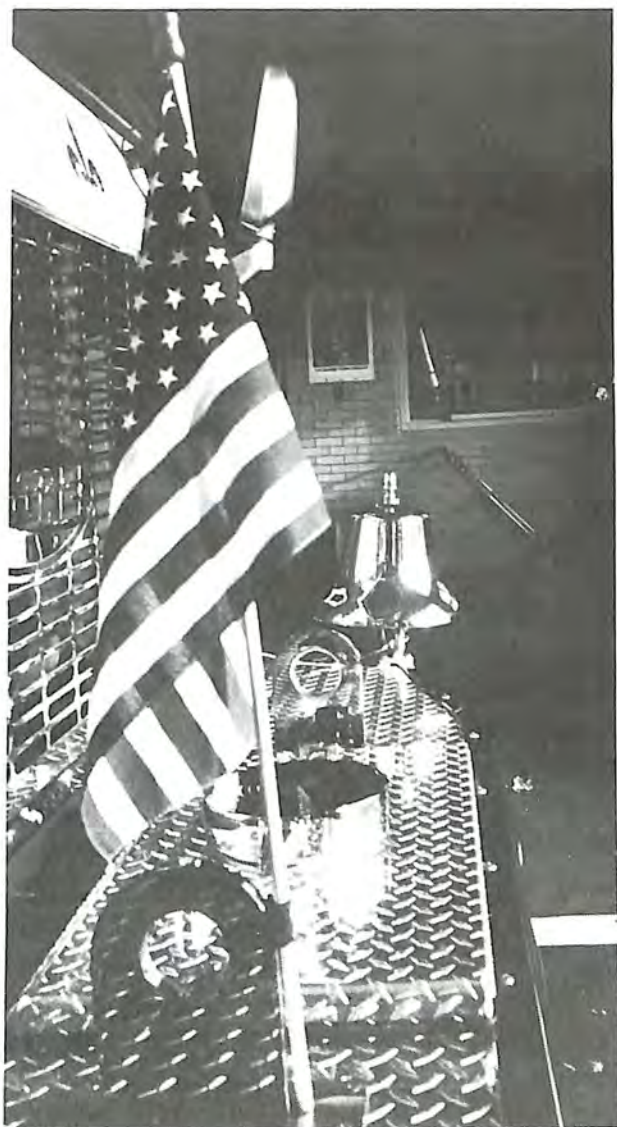
She had other alternatives as well. She could marry as a teenager like her friend Sally, who ended up in a miserable and abused marital life. She made the correct and intelligent decision of using education as a way of getting herself out of Mango Street.

After having lived in this country for more than a decade, America is not a ghost country to me anymore. Half of my friends are Americans from diverse backgrounds. I can speak, write and understand English. I adopted some of the ghost habits and became part

ghost myself. In fact, I know more about the history of the United States than I do about the history of China. However, someday I will go back to Hong Kong and China to visit and to learn more about my own culture. After all, I am Chinese and I am proud.

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Looks Could Kill

Kimberly Keenan

The first thing you see is a woman
just laying across the sheets.
She may be half naked or
have nothing on at all.
They say that she's sexy and beautiful
when they look at her sunken in skin.
You can't always see the beauty within.
If you cover it with make-up and fantasies.
As she looks in the mirror
all that she sees is a ghost,
and she thinks,
"Is that really me?"
Now you can be trapped
in the mystery they call beauty.
The war that you fight and never seem to win.
The enemy is invisible and you never see
the creature that tries to capture you and me.
The creature will lie and tell you
if you starve yourself you get the perfect
relationship and the perfect life.
The truth is if you starve yourself
you may die,
but the creature doesn't care about you!
Remember that happiness comes from inside your soul,
it's a treasure that is hidden within.
If you take the time to find your true meaning of beauty,
you may be surprised that it was
right in front of your eyes.
Just look in the mirror
and there you will see
the most beautiful person that can be!!

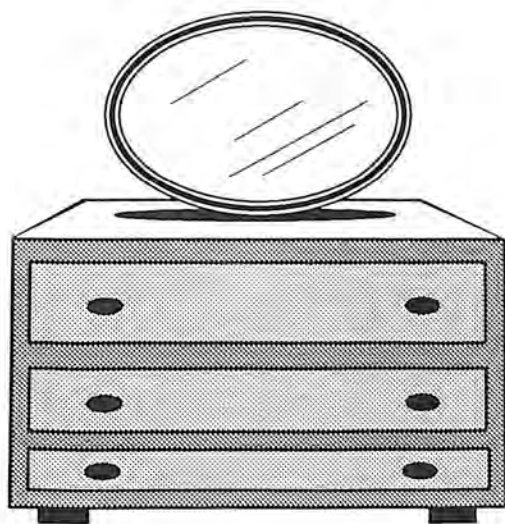


Untitled
Sara Harlan

To grow old and hold the wind like a prayer,
Whispered recollections blooming in mist.
Idle dreams, crashing through shadows, despair
Knowing darkness once touched soon be kissed.
Have me a keepsake for my future still
Tho, alas, Autumn's days are nearly lost.
To breathe the Summer's sun with strength at will
Was seduction then. I pay now the cost.
As the river nears in eyes growing dim,
And though wiser, thoughts are vacant and few,
The wind holds my prayer that I trust to Him:
May all be resolved before I adieu.
And though small, the tokens of my life kept,
All be lost in haze that was laughed and wept.

Bureau
Melinda W. Green

Sometimes
I sneak up on my childhood dresser and
yank open a drawer
Hoping to catch the smell of home



Awakening

Judith Campbell

This most amazing dawn
would have happened anyway.

It could have come and gone
without my witness.

But today,
the robin's song
and silent sun fingers in my woods

remind me of the gifts I sometimes miss

in practiced,
timed,
efficiency.

October 29, 1993

Suicide, Death, and Rebirth

Anonymous

(In the last issue of Commonthought, I wrote about my Depression experience and how it became a turning point in my life. This essay is a continuation.)

A vast part of me had died when I decided—and attempted—to take my own life. My will, courage, and hope to survive had vanished like the mist into the thin air. The emotional roller-coaster I had been riding for more than several weeks had completely taken over my sanity and rationality.

Most people have a distorted idea that people who commit suicide are weak and foolish. I was one of them. I never thought I would actually try to commit suicide. Never say never, because life is unpredictable. Human beings are vulnerable and we have no control over our fates at times.

Based upon my own experience and reading, most people who commit suicide are in a tremendous amount of pain, either physical and/or emotional. In most cases, they are depressed and feel trapped in life. The only way to end this intolerable pain and misery is through death. As a result, they often don't think about the consequences of their actions. Suicide is a very overwhelming and painful experience. When a person has reached this stage, he/she has hit rock bottom.

Some people say that suicide is cowardly; they just don't understand. Suicide attempts require physical courage and determination. Most people complain about a tiny papercut. They would hesitate to prick their fingers with a pin. Just imagine using a sharp butcher knife to slash your wrist three or four times! How would you feel? Would you call for help immediately? We should not be too quick to judge the actions of others without putting ourselves into the other person's position that has led to such desperation.

Love, support, care, patience, and understanding are extremely important to the person who is recovering from his/her suicide attempts. Instead of placing blame on a person or guessing the reason behind the acts, we should be supportive. It is important to try to

determine the emotional pressures and turmoil that are the actual causes of the suicide attempts and try to understand what the person is going through during this very difficult period of his/her life.

Next time that you read or hear about a person who has attempted suicide, think before you speak. After all, life is unpredictable. I am not trying to scare you, but you never know if you will become one of us!

Without death, there will be no rebirth. Although I did not die physically, I underwent a death of my spirit. If I tell you I am still the same person after my suicide attempts and Depression experience, I am lying. It's impossible not to change. Let's take the example of either a broken glass or mirror. Even though you place the pieces back together, a crack still exists.

Some people will become much stronger when they experience traumatic events in their lives, while others might become vice versa. I am one of the fortunate ones because I have become a much stronger, outspoken and confident person after my incident. I did a lot of soul searching and thinking. Through this process of analysis, I have learned to love, understand, and believe in myself. I explore my limits and expand my strengths. I pay attention to my feelings and am not afraid to acknowledge my fear and anxiety.

As a result, a new part of me has been born. I am a more stable and philosophical person today. I have developed my self-identity and sense of self-worth. I am no longer the little lost girl who tries hard to please everyone. For the first time in my life, I have taken time to smell the roses. It's an absolutely wonderful and sensational feeling. Not only has this experience opened my eyes, but it has also broadened my learning horizon.

Although I don't have any formal religious background or belief, I strongly believed that there was someone out there looking after me. I felt truly blessed, and I just want to say thank you very much. I am extremely grateful and fortunate that I have been given a second chance to live. As my psychiatrist pointed out, I am a little miracle because my suicide attempts left me with sixty stitches on my left wrist, half of my blood supply gone, and my system overdosed

with Tylenol; but I am still living today.

In recovering from my Depression and suicide attempts, I have developed my own philosophy of life and living: never push myself beyond limits and try to lend a helping hand to those in need to make this world a better place. It's okay to make mistakes as long as I learn from them. Once in awhile, I definitely need to slow down and smell the roses. Most importantly, I will learn to love and believe in myself.

In closing, I would like to share my favorite poem, which sums up my feelings.

One Day At A Time

Do not look back
and feel sorry
about the past,
for it's gone.

Do not worry
about the future
for it has not yet come.

Live in the present,
and make it beautiful.

© *Blue Arts, Inc.*, 1983

Contributor's Notes

Judith Campbell has been painting, writing, and teaching for over twenty years. Judith is now studying for a Ph. D. degree in art and religious studies, plus preparing for a Unitarian-Universalist community-based ministry.

King-Kwan Kathy Cheng is a graduating Senior. King-Kwan majors in Education and her hobbies include writing, reading, drawing and painting.

Donna Cole teaches composition and literature in the Undergraduate School. Donna is also the Associate Director of The Learning Center.

Bryson Dean is a freelance computer graphics designer who works in television and video as well as print. This is her third year with the magazine.

Joan Dolamore works in the School of Management at Lesley College, and is in the process of acquiring her doctoral degree at Harvard University. Joan is an addict of John Ford westerns and secretly watches Arnold Schwarzenegger movies, with the shades drawn of course.

Tamae Eda is a Junior majoring in Liberal Studies with a minor in Human Services. Tamae is from Japan and attended Senzoku GaKuen College for two years before coming to Lesley

Johanna S. Goodman is an undergraduate student, class of '94, at Lesley College. Johanna is majoring in Human Services with a specialization in Art Therapy. Johanna's new and unexpected passion is acting. She is playing Mistress Quickly in Shakespeare's *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.

Melinda W. Green works in the Graduate School Associate Dean's

office at Lesley College, and is a student in the Computers in Education Master's program. Melinda is often daydreaming about one or the other of her favorite travel destinations—Martha's Vineyard and Central Oregon. Her poetry has appeared in *Womanthought* and *Two Ton Santa*.

Julie Grimmer is a Senior in the Human Services program, who hopes to some day turn her poetry into sad country 'n western tunes.

Saskia Grunberger is a Sophomore in the Human Services program. Saskia is currently is in rehearsal for *The Merry Wives of Windsor* in which she plays Anne Page—a girl who outwits her parents and marries the man she loves, Fenton.

Martha Hagerty is a Senior majoring in Humanities. She has spent the past four years developing a fabulous shrine to Elvis Presley. Martha enjoys drawing, watching TV, making Jello, and hanging out with Ben and Gus. She hopes to some day open a petting zoo.

Sara Harlan is a student in the National Outreach Master's program for Creative Arts in Learning in Washington. This was Sara's first time writing sonnets.

Moire Claire Harrigan is a graduating Senior who majors in Humanities with a concentration in Literature. Moira is performing as Pistol in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, her second Shakespeare production at Lesley.

Marie Horgan is a Senior majoring in Early Childhood Education. Marie wants to travel once she graduates but in reality she knows she needs a job and will only be traveling between home and work.

Elizabeth Jones is a Senior in the Undergraduate School.

Holly Ireland is a Junior and is presently the Vice-President of the Student Senate.

Christine Kavanagh is a Freshman majoring in Special Education, and enjoys taking photographs and going to the beach.

Kimberly Keenan is a Freshman in the Human Services program.

Stephanie Kornfield was the Campus Shop manager during the Fall semester. She loves to write poetry.

Barton Kunstler is an Associate Professor and program director at the Lesley College School of Management. His doctoral degree is in Classics, and the ancient world continues to inform his understanding of the modern one, even unto management issues. Barton's articles on scholarly and professional topics have appeared in a variety of publications, and he is at work on a novel about ancient Sparta on the eve of the Persian invasions.

Sebastian Lockwood is a novelist and poet. He has two novels in manuscript: *Eely Isle* and *The Oak and The Olive*. Sebastian is currently at work on a new novel entitled *ORA*.

Kirk Margoles was born and raised in California. He has been writing poetry and music since he was a child. He studied Creative Writing at the University of California, Santa Cruz. Kirk participated in poetry readings in San Francisco, Berkeley, and Boston. He has been involved in several musical groups, and has performed at Boston area venues. Kirk is currently studying Music Therapy at Lesley College, and working in the activity department of a nursing home. He resides in Somerville with his wife and son.

Amanda M. McNuge is a graduating Senior, who hopes to be the next U.S. Attorney General and U.S. Supreme Court Justice. Amanda is currently the Editor-in-Chief of this issue of *Commonthought*. She is a lover of the law and literature, especially Shakespeare's tragedies.

Teresa Meile is a Senior majoring in Early Childhood Education. She plans to teach, get her Master's, maybe even her Ph.D.. Teresa plans to work in the field of educational research. Her interests include writing, making weird art projects, eating Italian food, listening to jazz with Jackson Bailey, and gettin' caught in the rain.

Jill A. Mendelson is a Senior majoring in Social Science and minoring in Human Services.

Lisa Mitrano is a Senior majoring in Education with a secondary focus in Humanities and a concentration in Art and Music.

MSG (or better known as Mike Galvin) works at the Registrar's Office and is currently working on his first book. It involves a young couple who claim their cat as a dependent and is entitled, *Our Son Fluffy*.

Tomoko Nagao is a Junior majoring in Liberal Studies minoring in Human Services. Tomoko attended Senzoku GaKaen College in Japan for two years before coming to Lesley.

Judith Periale is a writer/poet who makes her living at Lesley College in Cambridge, Massachusetts. She has studied poetry with Elisabeth McKin and continues to study with Judith Steinbergh. Ms. Periale is a frequent contributor at poetry readings in the Cambridge area.

Anne Elezabeth Pluto is an Associate Professor of English. She trained at Shakespeare and Company this summer and is presently on sabbatical, finishing her novel, *Hurricane Light*, and directing the Oxford Street Players in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, which opens on April 7th and runs until the 10th.

Dawn Presnell is a Freshman. She wrote her piece for a class with Rosalie Fink.

Sharon Romeo is a Senior in the Undergraduate School studying Humanities and Elementary Education. Upon graduation in May, Sharon plans to dedicate many hours (or days or months) to bring her love here from England. (Any connections to immigration—call me!!!)

Carma Rorke is an undergraduate Sophomore in the Human Services program with a concentration in Sociology.

Stephanie Anne Ruediger majors in Liberal Arts. Poetry is the closest a woman can come to digging straight into her soul and putting what she finds out on display. Class of '94.

Bharati Samnani is an undergraduate Senior who loves chocolates, babies, her family, and life. "Life is a song—sing it!"

Cheryl Smith has been writing poetry for about six years. Cheryl works in the Registrar's Office, and is eagerly anticipating the birth of her first child in March.

Andrea B. Tower is the Art Editor of *Commonthought*. Andrea is an undergraduate student, class of '94, at Lesley College. Her major is Middle School Education and Humanities, focusing in Literature. Andrea, in her spare time, has taken on another role other than scholar, wife, and mother. She plays the role of Hostess in Shakespeare's *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.

Ellen Tara Voll is a student in the Adult Bachelor's degree program at Lesley College.

Pamela F. WattsFlavin is a Human Development major in the Adult Bachelor's degree program, who will be graduating in May. Pamela's interest include reading, writing, swimming and talking, not necessarily in that order or all at once. She lives in a Cambridge-border town with her husband, son, and attack cat.





